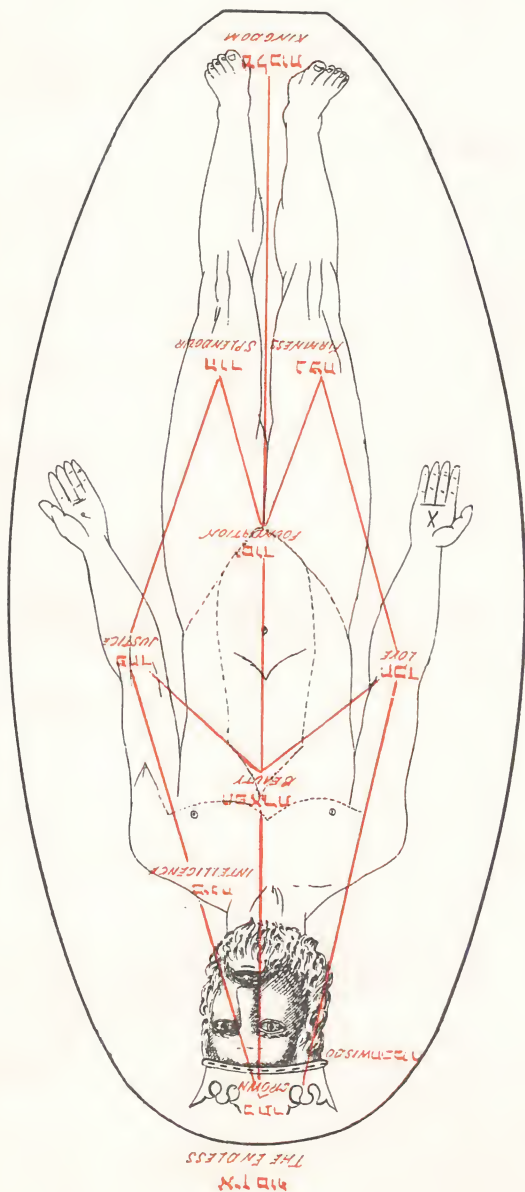


THE ESSENES



THE KABBALAH



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# THE ESSENES

THEIR HISTORY AND DOCTRINES

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# THE KABBALAH

ITS DOCTRINES, DEVELOPMENT

AND LITERATURE

By  
David  
CHRISTIAN D. GINSBURG, LL.D. 1831-1914



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THE ESSENES  
THEIR HISTORY AND DOCTRINES  
AN ESSAY

*ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν  
καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην δεκτὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν*

ACTS X, 35.

TO  
JAMES A. PICTON, F.S.A.,

THIS ESSAY IS  
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

## I.

It is very surprising that the Essenes, whose exemplary virtues elicited the unbounded admiration of even the Greeks and Romans, and whose doctrines and practices contributed so materially to the spread of Christianity, should be so little known among intelligent Christians. The current information upon this remarkable sect or order of Judaism, to be found in ecclesiastical histories and Cyclopædias, is derived from the short notices of Philo, Pliny, Josephus, Solinus, Porphyry, Eusebius, and Epiphanius. These seven witnesses—of whom the first and third are Jewish philosophers, the second, fourth and fifth heathen writers, and the last two Christian church historians—are all who, till within a very recent period, have been subpœnaed before the tribunal of public opinion, to give evidence as to the character of these very much misunderstood and neglected Essenes.

Not only is this combined testimony insufficient, but it is too much tainted with the peculiar dogmas of the respective witnesses, to furnish the general reader with an unbiassed notion of the character and doctrines of this ancient sect. Philo and Josephus, writing in Greek and in apology for their Jewish brethren, were too anxious to represent to the Greeks and Romans every phase and sect of Judaism, as corresponding to the different systems of Greek and Roman philosophy; Pliny, Solinus, and Porphyry, again, betray too great an ignorance of the inward workings of the Jewish religion, and too much prejudice against the Jews; whilst Epiphanius draws upon his imagination, and Eusebius simply copies the account of Philo, with the well-known patristic pen. Nor can the

modern descriptions of the Essenes, as given in the histories of the church and in the popular Cyclopædias, be always relied upon when they profess to give the results of the afore-mentioned garbled scraps of ancient information ; since the writers are either too much afraid of, or too much pleased with, the marked resemblance between some of the doctrines and practices of Christianity and Essenism. Hence those who style themselves the true evangelical Christians are very anxious to destroy every appearance of affinity between Essenism and Christianity, lest it should be said that the one gave rise to the other ; whilst those who are termed Rationalists multiply and magnify every feature of resemblance, in order to show that Christianity is nothing but a development of Essenism—so that the poor Essenes are crucified between the two.

The design of this essay is to give an impartial statement of the doctrines and practices of the Essenes ; to show their rise and progress, their relationship both to Judaism and Christianity, their numbers and localities, to trace the most probable signification of their name, &c., &c. To do this, I not only appeal to the seven stereotyped witnesses, but to the information upon this subject scattered throughout the Midrashim and the Talmud. But not to incur the charge of partiality, as well as to enable you to test my conclusions, I have collected all that the ancients have written upon this subject, and append to this paper the whole account which Philo, Pliny, Josephus, Solinus, Porphyry, Eusebius, and Epiphanius give of the Essenes.

The cardinal doctrines and practices of this sect are as follows :—They regarded the inspired Law of God with the utmost veneration. In fact, their adhesion to it was such that they were led thereby to pay the greatest homage to Moses, the lawgiver, and to visit with capital punishment any one of the brotherhood who blasphemed his name. The

highest aim of their life was to become the temples of the Holy Ghost, when they could prophesy, perform miraculous cures, and, like Elias, be the forerunners of the Messiah. This they regarded as the last stage of perfection, which could only be reached by gradual growth in holiness, brought about through strictly observing the commandments and the Levitical laws of purity contained in the Pentateuch, mortifying the flesh and the lusts thereof, and being meek and lowly in spirit, inasmuch as this would bring them into closer communion with him who is the Holy One of Israel. This earnest desire to avoid everything which involved profanity in the slightest degree and which might interpose between them and the Deity, made them abstain from using oaths, because they regarded the invocation, in swearing, of heaven or the heavenly throne, or anything which represents God's glory, as a desecration. Their communication was yea, yea; nay, nay; whatsoever was more than these came of evil.

Their increased strictness in enforcing the observance of the rigid Mosaic laws of Levitical purity, which were afterwards amplified and rendered still more rigid by traditional explanations,<sup>1</sup> ultimately compelled the Essenes to withdraw

<sup>1</sup> According to tradition there were four degrees of purity. 1. The ordinary purity required of every worshipper in the temple (כְּדִרַת הַזֶּהֱבִי). 2. The higher degree of purity necessary for eating of the heave-offering (כְּדִרַת תְּרוּמָה). 3. The still higher degree requisite for partaking of the sacrifices (כְּדִרַת זֶהֱבִי). And 4. The degree of purity required of those who sprinkle the water absolving from sin (כְּדִרַת חִטָּה). Each degree of purity required a greater separation from the impurities described in Leviticus xi, 24—xv, 28. These impure subjects were termed the *fathers of impurity*; that which was touched by them was designated the *first generation of impurity*; what was touched by this again, was called the *second generation of impurity*; and so on. Now, heave-offerings—the second degree of holiness—became impure when touched by the *third generation*; the flesh of sacrifices—the third degree of holiness—when coming in contact with the fourth generation; and so on. These degrees of purity had even to be separated from each other; because the lower degree was, in respect to the higher one, regarded as impure, and any one who lived according to a higher degree of purity became impure by touching one who lived according to a lower degree, and could only regain his purity by lustrations (בִּזְיוּלָה). The first degree was obligatory upon every one, the other grades were voluntary. Before partaking of the heave-offering, the washing of hands was required; and before eating of the flesh of sacrifices, immersion of the whole body was required—*Comp. Babylonian Talmud, Tract Chagiga, 18 b.*

themselves altogether from the society of their Jewish brethren, to form a separate community, and to live apart from the world, since contact with any one who did not practice these laws, or with anything belonging to such an one, rendered them impure. This fear of coming in contact with that which is impure, as well as the desire not to be hindered in their spiritual communion with their Creator, also made the Essenes abstain from marriage; inasmuch as women, according to the law, are subject to perpetual pollutions in menstruum and child-birth (compare Lev. xii, 1—8; xv, 19—31), and as going to one's wife, even under ordinary circumstances, is regarded as defiling (*vide infra*, p. 39, note 19). There were, however, some weak brethren who could not be like the angels in heaven, neither marrying nor being given in marriage; these were allowed to take wives, but they could never advance to the highest orders of the brotherhood, and had, moreover, to observe laws specially enacted for married brethren and sisters.

Here, in their separation from the Jewish nation, whatever any one of them possessed was deposited in the general treasury, from which the wants of the whole community alike were supplied by stewards appointed by the whole brotherhood; so that they had all things in common. There were no distinctions amongst them, such as rich and poor, masters and servants; they called no one master upon earth, but all ministered to the wants of one another. They lived peaceably with all men, reprobated slavery and war, and would not even manufacture any martial instruments whatever, however great the temptation or the fear might be. They were governed by a president, who was elected by the whole body, and who also acted as the judge of the community. Trials were conducted by juries, composed, not as our juries are, of twelve persons, but of the majority of the community, or of at least a hundred members, who had to be unanimous in their verdict.

The brother who was found guilty of walking disorderly was excommunicated, yet was he not regarded as an enemy, but was admonished as a brother, and received back after due repentance.

As it was contrary to the laws of Levitical purity to buy anything from one who did not practice those laws, the Essenes had to raise the supplies of all their wants among themselves. In this they experienced no difficulty, as their food and raiment were most simple and very self-denying, and as each one of the community willingly took his share of work in the department in which he most excelled. Some were engaged in tilling the ground, some in tending flocks and rearing bees, some in preparing food, some in making the articles of dress, some in healing the sick, and some in instructing the young; whilst all of them devoted certain hours to studying the mysteries of nature and revelation and of the celestial hierarchy. They always got up before the sun rose, and never talked about any worldly matters till they had all assembled together and, with their faces turned towards the sun, offered up their national hymn of praise (המאיר לארץ) for the renewal of the light of the day. This done, every one betook himself to his work, according to the directions of the overseers, and remained at it till the fifth hour (or eleven o'clock, a.m.), when the labour of the forenoon regularly terminated. All of them again assembled together, had a baptism in cold water, put on their white garments, the symbol of purity, and then made their way to the refectory, which they entered with as much solemnity as if it were the temple. The meal was a common one: and each member took his seat according to the order of age. Those of the brethren who were the bakers and cooks then placed before each one a little loaf of bread and a dish of the most simple food, consisting chiefly of vegetables as they ate very little animal flesh, and the repast commenced after the priest had invoked God's



blessing upon it. A mysterious silence was observed during the meal, which had the character of a sacrament, and may have been designed as a substitute for the sacrifices which they refused to offer in the temple. The priest concluded it by offering thanks to the Bountiful Supplier of all our wants, which was the signal of dismissal. Hereupon all withdrew, put off their white and sacred garments, and dressed themselves in their working clothes, resumed their several employments which they had to do according to the directions of the overseers till the evening, when they assembled again to partake of a common meal. But though every thing was done under the directions of the overseers, and the Essenes had even to receive their presents through the stewards, yet in two things they were at perfect liberty to act as they pleased, viz., they could relieve the distressed with as much money as they thought proper, and manifest their compassion for those who were not of the brotherhood as much as they liked, and whenever they liked. Such was their manner of life during the week days.

The Sabbath they observed with the utmost rigour, and regarded even the removal of a vessel as labour, and a desecration of this holy day. On this day they took special care not to be guilty of forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. Ten persons constituted a complete and legal number for divine worship in the synagogue, and in the presence of such an assembly an Essene would never spit, nor would he at any time spit to his right hand. In the synagogue, as at meals, each one took his seat according to age, in becoming attire. They had no ordained ministers, whose exclusive right it was to conduct the service; any one that liked took up the Bible and read it, whilst another, who had much experience in spiritual matters, expounded what was read. The distinctive ordinances of the brotherhood, as well as the mysteries connected with the Tetragrammaton

and the angelic worlds were the prominent topics of Sabbatic instruction. Every investigation into the causes of the phenomena both of mind and matter was strictly forbidden, because the study of logic and metaphysics was regarded as injurious to a devotional life.

Celibacy being the rule of Essenism, the ranks of the brotherhood had to be filled up by recruits from the Jewish community at large. They preferred taking children, whom they educated most carefully and taught the practices of the order, believing that of such the kingdom of heaven is best made up. Every grown-up candidate (ὁ ζηλωτής) had to pass through a noviciate of two stages, which extended over three years, before he could be finally admitted into the order. Upon entering the first stage, which lasted twelve months, the novice (νεοσύτατος) had to cast all his possessions into the common treasury. He then received a copy of the regulations of the brotherhood (διαίταν τοῦ τάγματος), as well as a *spade* (σκαλὶς ἀξινάριον=תל''), to bury the excrement, (comp. Deut. xxiii, 12—14,) an *apron* (περίζωμα=פריט), used at the lustrations, and a *white robe* (λευκὴν ἐσθῆτα=בגד לבן) to put on at meals, being the symbols of purity. During the whole of this period he was an outsider, and was not admitted to the common meals, yet he had to observe some of the ascetic rules of the Society. If, at the close of this stage, the community found that he had properly acquitted himself during the probationary year, the novice was admitted into the second stage, which lasted two years, and was called an *approacher* (προσίων ἔγγιον). During the period which lasted two years he was admitted to a closer fellowship with the brotherhood, and shared in their lustral rites (καθαρώτερων πρὸς τῶν ἀγνείαν ὑδάτων μεταλαμβάνει), but was still not admitted to the common meals (εἰς τὰς συμβιώσεις), nor to any office. If he passed satisfactorily through the second stage of probation, the *approacher* became an *associate*, or a full member of the society (ὁμιλητής,

ὅς εἰς τὸν ὄμιλον ἐγκρίνεται=חבר), when he was received into the brotherhood and partook of the common meal (συμβιωτής).

Before, however, he was made a *homiletes*, or finally admitted into close fellowship, he had to bind himself by a most solemn oath (this being the only occasion on which the Essenes used an oath) to observe three things. 1. *Love to God*. 2. *Merciful justice towards all men*; especially to honor nobody as master, to avoid the wicked, to help the righteous, to be faithful to every man, and especially to rulers (τοῖς κρατοῦσιν), for without God no one comes to be ruler. And 3. *Purity of character*, which implied humility, love of truth, hatred of falsehood, strict secrecy towards outsiders, so as not to divulge the secret doctrines (μυστήρια) to any one, and perfect openness with the members of the order, and, finally, carefully to preserve the books belonging to their sect (τὰ τῆς αἰρέσεως αὐτῶν βιβλία), and the names of the angels (τὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων ὀνόματα) or the mysteries connected with the *Tetragrammaton* (שם המפורש) and the other names of God and the angels, comprised in the theosophy (מעשה מרכבה) as well as with the cosmogony (מעשה בראשית) which also played so important a part among the Jewish mystics and the Kabbalists.

The three sections consisting of candidate (ὁ ζηλῶν), ap-proacher (πῆροσιῶν ἔγγιον), and associate (ὁμιλητής, ὅς εἰς τὸν ὄμιλον ἐγκρίνεται), were subdivided into four orders, distinguished from each other by superior holiness. So marked and serious were these distinctions, that if one belonging to a higher degree of purity touched one who belonged to a lower order, i.e., if one of the fourth or highest order came in contact with one of the third or lower order, or if one of the third touched one of the second order, or if one of the second order touched one of the first or lowest order, he immediately became impure, and could only regain his purity by lustrations. From the beginning of the noviciate to the achievement of the

highest spiritual state, there were *eight* different stages which marked the gradual growth in holiness. Thus, after being accepted as a novice and obtaining *the apron* (זריו—*επιζωμα*) the symbol of purity, he attained (1) to the state of *outward* or *bodily* purity by baptisms (זריזות מביאה לידי נקיות). From this state of bodily purity he progressed (2) to that stage which imposed abstinence from connubial intercourse (נקיות מביאה לידי פרישות), or to that degree of holiness, which enabled him to practise celibacy. Having succeeded in mortifying the flesh in this respect, he advanced (3) to the stage of *inward* or *spiritual* purity (פרישות מביאה לידי טהרה). From this stage again he advanced (4) to that which required the banishing of all anger and malice, and the cultivation of a meek and lowly spirit (טהרה מביאה לידי ענוה). This led him (5) to the culminating point of holiness (ענוה מביאה לידי הסידות). Upon this summit of holiness he became (6) the temple of the Holy Spirit, and could prophesy (הסידות מביאה לידי רה"ק). Thence again he advanced (7) to that stage in which he was enabled to perform miraculous cures, and raise the dead (רוח הקדש לידי תחח"מ). And finally, he attained (8) to the position of Elias the forerunner of the Messiah (תחח"מ לידי אליהו).

The earnestness and determination of these Essenes to advance to the highest state of holiness were seen in their self-denying and godly life; and it may fairly be questioned whether any religious system has ever produced such a community of saints. Their absolute confidence in God and resignation to the dealings of Providence; their uniformly holy and unselfish life; their unbounded love of virtue, and utter contempt for worldly fame, riches or pleasure; their industry, temperance, modesty and simplicity of life; their contentment of mind and cheerfulness of temper; their love of order, and abhorrence of even the semblance of falsehood; their benevolence and philanthropy; their love for the brethren,

and their following peace with all men ; their hatred of slavery and war ; their tender regard for children, and reverence and anxious care for the aged ; their attendance on the sick, and readiness to relieve the distressed ; their humility and magnanimity ; their firmness of character and power to subdue their passions ; their heroic endurance under the most agonizing sufferings for righteousness' sake.; and their cheerfully looking forward to death, as releasing their immortal souls from the bonds of the body to be for ever in a state of bliss with their Creator—have hardly found a parallel in the history of mankind. No wonder that Jews, of different sects, Greeks and Romans, Christian church historians, and heathen writers have been alike constrained to lavish the most unqualified praise on this holy brotherhood. It seems that the Saviour of the world, who illustrated simplicity and innocence of character by the little child which he took up in his arms, also showed what is required for a holy life in the Sermon on the Mount by a description of the Essenes. So remarkably does this brotherhood exemplify the lessons which Christ propounds in Matth. chap v., &c.

This leads us to consider the question about the origin of this brotherhood, and their relationship to Judaism and Christianity. The assertion of Josephus that they "live the same kind of life which among the Greeks has been ordered by Pythagoras" (vide infra, p. 226, § 4,) has led some writers to believe that Essenism is the offspring of Pythagorism. The most able champion for this view is Zeller, the author of the celebrated *History of Philosophy*. He maintains<sup>2</sup> "that Essenism, at least as we know it from Philo and Josephus, has, in its essence, originated under Greek and especially under Pythagorean influences," and tries to support his conclusion by the following summary of the supposed resemblances between Neo-Pythagorism and Essenism. (1) "Both strive to attain to superior holiness by an ascetic life.

<sup>2</sup> Geschichte der Philosophie, vol. iii, part ii, p. 583 ff.

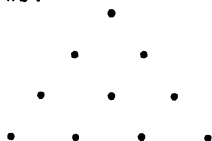
(2) Both repudiate animal sacrifices, the eating of animal food, wine and marriage. (3) Both of them are, however, not quite agreed among themselves about the latter point; for on both sides there are some who recommend marriage, but restrict connubial intercourse to procreation. (4) Moreover, both demand simplicity of life. (5) Both refrain from warm baths. (6) Both wear white garments, especially at dinner time. (7) Both lay the greatest value upon their purification and eschew everything unclean. (8) Both prohibit oaths, because a pious man does not require them. (9) Both find their social ideal in institutions which it is true were only realized by the Essenes, and in living together with perfect community of goods and unconditional subordination of individuals to their overseers. (10) Both insist on strict secrecy about their schools. (11) Both like symbolic representations of their doctrines. (12) Both support themselves on an allegorical interpretation of ancient traditions, whose authority they recognise. (13) Both worship higher powers in the elements, and pray to the rising sun. (14) Both seek to keep everything unclean from their sight, and for this reason have peculiar prescriptions about the discharge of the duties of nature. (15) Both cultivate the belief in intermediate beings between the supreme Deity and the world. (16) Both devote themselves to magic arts. (17) Both regard above all things the gift of prophesy as the highest fruit of wisdom and piety, and both boast to possess this gift in their most distinguished members. (18) Finally, Both corroborate their peculiar mode of life with a dualistic view of the relation of the spirit and matter, good and evil. (19) Both agree especially in their notions about the origin of the soul, its relationship to the body, and about a future life, only the doctrine of transmigration of souls seems not to have been known among the Essenes."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The figures before each point of comparison do not exist in the original German; I have inserted them in the translation in order to facilitate the references to these different points of comparison.

Striking as these resemblances may appear, it will be seen on a closer examination that some of the points which constitute this comparison do not exist in Essenism, that others are either due to the coloring of Josephus or have their origin in Judaism, that the difference between Pythagorism and Essenism are far more numerous and vital than the parallels, and that Zeller's conclusion is therefore not warranted. I shall examine these points seriatim.

(1) Asceticism is not foreign to Judaism. We meet with individuals who voluntarily imposed upon themselves ascetic life to be able, as they thought, to give themselves more entirely to the service of God by mortifying the lusts of the flesh, at a very early period of Biblical history; and we need only to refer to the regulations about Nazarites (Numb. vi. 1-21), to the case of Manoah and his wife (Judg. xiii.), to the life of Elijah (1 Kings xviii.-xix.) to the practices of the Rechabites throughout the Scriptures, of persons abstaining from the good things of this world, to see how the Essenes, without (Jer. xxxv. 2, &c.), and to the numerous instances which occur) copying the Pythagoreans or any other heathen fraternity, would naturally conclude that asceticism is conducive to a devotional life. (2) As to the repudiation of animal sacrifice, animal food, wine, &c., to which Zeller refers in the second point of comparison, I submit that the Essenes *did not repudiate* animal sacrifices, but that they *could not* offer them on account of the different view which they had about holiness, as Josephus most distinctly declares (*vide infra* p. 52), that neither Philo nor Josephus says a word about their objecting to eat animal flesh or drink wine, and that their celibacy arose from an extension of a law contained in the Pentateuch. Besides, it is not quite so certain that the Pythagoreans did not offer animal sacrifices; Diogenes Laertius and others positively state that Pythagoras himself sacrificed a hecatomb upon his discovering what is called the

Pythagoric theorem, *i.e.* that, in a right angled triangle, the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the sides.<sup>4</sup> (4) The fourth comparison about simplicity of life is involved in the first. (5) The statement in the fifth comparison, that the Essenes refrain from warm baths, is purely imaginary: (6, 7) whilst the white garments and the purifications mentioned in the sixth and seventh parallels are strictly Jewish and Biblical. As symbolic of purity the priests were required to clothe themselves in white linen (Exod. xxviii. 39-42; Levit. vi. 10; xvi. 4), and the saints in heaven, washed and cleansed from all impurity, are to be clad in white garments (4 Esdras ii. 39-45; Enoch lxi. 18; Rev. iii. 4; vi. 11; vii. 9, 14; xix. 8); soiled garments are regarded as emblematic of impurity (Zech. iii. 3, &c.) Inseparably connected therewith are the frequent purifications or washings enjoined on the priests before entering into the presence of God to perform religious acts (Levit. xvi. 4; 2 Chron. xxx. 19), and on the people generally after coming in contact with anything impure (Levit. xi. 25, 40; xv. 5-24). The white garments and the frequent purifications of the Essenes, who strove to live after the highest degree of Levitical purity, were therefore in perfect harmony with exaggerated Judaism. (8) As to the assertion in comparison 8 that the Pythagoreans prohibited oaths, it is well known that they did use oaths on important occasions, and that they held it to be most sacred to swear by the number four, which they represented by ten dots in the form of a triangle, so that each side consisted of four dots, as follows:—



<sup>4</sup> Comp. Diog. Laert. de Vitis Philosophorum, lib. viii. Vit. Pythagor. xii. It is true that Cicero represents Cotta as giving no credit to this story, because, as



The community of goods, the secrecy about their institutions, the symbolic representation of their doctrines, &c., mentioned in comparisons 9, 10, 11, 12, are the natural result of their manner of life. (13) That they worshipped the sun is not borne out by fact, (14) whilst their peculiar manner in performing the functions of nature is in accordance with the injunction of Scripture (Deut. xxiii. 18, 15), which the Essenes, as the spiritual host of the Lord, applied to themselves. (15) As to their very peculiar belief in intermediate beings between the Deity and the world, mentioned in the fifteenth point of comparison, I can only say that Philo and Josephus say nothing about it. (16) Their devotedness to the study of the magic arts was restricted to miraculous cures, and was not peculiar to them; since tradition had made Solomon the author of books on magical cures and exorcisms, and Josephus tells us (*vide infra*, p. 44, note 35) that he had seen other Jews performing these magic cures. (17) Neither is there anything foreign in the opinion, that the power to foretell future events can only be obtained by leading a life of preeminent holiness, for this was the common belief of the Jews, though it is true that the Essenes were the only section of the Jewish community who as a body strove to obtain the gift of prophecy. It, however, must not be forgotten that others too laid claim to this gift. Josephus tells us that when brought as prisoner of war before Vespasian, he addressed the Roman general as follows:—"Thou, Vespasian thinkest that thou hast simply a prisoner of war in me, but I appear before thee as a prophet of important future events. If I had not to deliver to thee a message from God, I would have known what the Jewish law demands, and how a general ought to die. Dost thou want to send me to Nero? For what? Will his successors, who ascend the throne before thee, reign

he apprehends, Pythagoras never offered animal sacrifices (*De Natura Deorum*, lib. iii. cap. xxxvi.), but it is also related by Athenæus (*Deipnosoph. lib. x.*), Plutarch and others.

long on it? No! thou, Vespasian, wilt be emperor and autocrat—thou, and this thy son." (*Jewish War*, iii. 8, § 9). This prophecy of Josephus is also recorded by the celebrated Roman historian Dion Cassius who says: "Josephus, a Jew, was taken prisoner by him (i.e. Vespasian), and put in chains; but he smilingly addressed him: 'Thou putttest me now in chains, but thou wilt loose them again, after twelve months, as emperor'" (*lib. lxvi. c. 1*); and by Tacitus (*lib. v. c. 13*). What Zeller says in comparisons 18 and 19 about their dualistic view of the relationship of spirit and matter, good and evil, and their notions of the origin of the soul, is entirely owing to Josephus' colouring of the subject, as may be seen from the notes on the extracts from this historian in the second part of this Essay.

Having thus shown that the parallels between Pythagorism and Essenism are more imaginary than real, and that the few things which might be considered as being analogous are unimportant, and are such as will naturally develop themselves among any number of enlightened men who devote themselves almost exclusively to a contemplative religious life, I shall now point out some of the vital differences between the two brotherhoods. 1. The Pythagoreans were essentially polytheists; the Essenes were real monotheistic Jews, worshippers of the Holy One of Israel. 2. The Pythagoreans clustered round Pythagoras as the centre of their spiritual and intellectual life, and estimated the degree of perfection of any of the members by the degree of intimacy which he enjoyed with Pythagoras: the Essenes regarded the inspired Scriptures as their sole source of spiritual life, and called no man master on earth, every one having the same right to teach, and being alike eligible for all the offices in the commonwealth. 3. The Pythagoreans favored matrimony, and we are told that Pythagoras himself had a wife and children; whilst celibacy was the rule of

Essenism, marriage being the exception. 4. The Pythagoreans believed in the doctrine of metempsychosis, which led them to abstain from eating animal flesh, because human souls migrated into animals, and made Pythagoras once intercede in behalf of a dog that was being beaten, because he recognised in its cries the voice of a departed friend: the Essenes believed no such thing. 5. Scientific studies, such as mathematics, astronomy, music, &c., formed an essential part of the Pythagorean system: Essenism strictly forbade these studies as injurious to a devotional life. 6. Pythagorism was occupied with investigating the problems of the origin and constitution of the universe: Essenism regarded such inquiries as impious, and most implicitly looked upon God as the creator of all things. 7. Pythagorism taught that man can control his fortune and overrule his circumstances: Essenism maintained that fate governs all things, and that nothing can befall man contrary to its determination and will. 8. Pythagorism enjoined ointment to be used by its followers: the Essenes regarded it as defilement. 9. The Pythagoreans had a sovereign contempt for all those who did not belong to their ranks: the Essenes were most exemplary in their charity towards all men, and in their unbounded kindness to those who were not of the brotherhood. 10. The Pythagoreans were an aristocratical and exclusive club, and excited the jealousy and hatred not only of the democratical party in Crotona, but also of a considerable number of the opposite faction, so much so that it speedily led to their destruction: the Essenes were meek and lowly in spirit, and were so much beloved by those who belonged to different sects, that Pharisees and Sadducees, Greeks and Romans, Jews and Gentiles, joined in lavishing the highest praise upon them.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> An excellent account of the Pythagorean system is given by Zeller, *Geschichte der Philosophie*. Erster Theil, Tübingen, 1856, pp. 206-365; Grote, *History of Greece*. vol. iv. London, 1857, pp. 527-553; and Mason, in *Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, Article PYTHAGORAS.

As to the relationship which Essenism bears to Judaism, the very fact that the Essenes, like the other Jews, professed to be guided by the teachings of the Bible, and that a rupture between them and the Jewish community at large is nowhere mentioned, but that on the contrary they are always spoken of in the highest terms of commendation, would of itself be sufficient to prove it. In doctrine, as well as in practice, the Essenes and the Pharisees were nearly alike. Both had four classes of Levitical purity, which were so marked that one who lived according to the higher degree of purity, became impure by touching one who practised a lower degree, and could only regain his purity by lustration. Both subjected every applicant for membership to a noviciate of twelve months. Both gave their novices an apron in the first year of their probation. Both refused to propound the mysteries of the cosmogony and cosmology to any one except to members of the society. Both had stewards in every place where they resided to supply the needy strangers of their order with articles of clothing and food. Both regarded office as coming from God. Both looked upon their meal as a sacrament. Both bathed before sitting down to the meal. Both wore a symbolic garment on the lower part of the body whilst bathing. Amongst both the priest began and concluded the meal with prayer. Both regarded ten persons as constituting a complete number for divine worship, and held the assembly of such a number as sacred. Amongst both of them none would spit to the right hand in the presence of such an assembly. Both washed after performing the functions of nature. Both would not remove a vessel on the Sabbath. And both abstained from using oaths, though it is true that the Essenes alone uniformly observed it as a sacred principle. The differences between the Essenes and the Pharisees are such as would naturally develop themselves in the course of time from the extreme rigour with which the former sought to practise the Levitical laws of

purity. As contact with any one or with anything belonging to any one who did not live according to the same degree of purity, rendered them impure according to the strict application of their laws, the Essenes were in the first place obliged to withdraw from intercourse with their other Jewish brethren, and form themselves into a separate brotherhood. Accordingly the first difference between them and the others was that they formed an isolated order. The second point of difference was on marriage. The Pharisees regarded marriage as a most sacred institution, and laid it down as a rule that every man is to take a wife at the age of eighteen (Comp. Aboth v. 21), whilst the Essenes were celibates, which, as we have seen before, also arose from their anxiety to avoid defilement. Hence the declaration in Aboth d. R. Nathan—"there are eight kinds of Pharisees; . . . and those Pharisees who live in celibacy are Essenes" (c. xxxvii.).<sup>6</sup> The third difference which existed between them and the Pharisees, and which was also owing to the rigorous application of the Levitical laws of purity, was that they did not frequent the temple and would not offer sacrifices. And fourthly, though they firmly believed in the immortality of the soul, yet, unlike the Pharisees, they did not believe in the resurrection of the body.

The identity of many of the precepts and practices of

<sup>6</sup> R. Nathan, the Babylonian as he is called, was Vice-President of the College in Palestine, under the Presidency of Simon III. b. Gamaliel II. A.D. 140. The above-quoted work of which he is the reputed author, as indicated by its title, *אבות דרבי נתן* i.e. *the Aboth of R. Nathan*, is a compilation of the apothegms and moral sayings of the Jewish fathers (*אבות*), interspersed with traditional explanations of divers texts of Scripture, consisting of forty-one chapters. Both the historian and moral philosopher will find this work an important contribution to the literary and philosophical history of antiquity. It is printed in the different editions of the Talmud, and has also been published separately with various commentaries, in Venice, 1622; Amsterdam, 1778, &c., &c.; and a Latin translation of it was published by our learned countryman, Francis Taylor, under the title of *R. Nathanis Tractatus de Patribus, latine cum Notis*. London, 1654, 4to. Comp. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*. Berlin, 1832, p.p. 108, 109; Fürst, *Kultur-und Literaturgeschichte der Juden in Asien*. Leipzig, 1849, p. 16 ff; by the same author, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, volume iii. Leipzig, 1863, p. 19 ff; Steinschneider, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* col. 2,032 ff.

Essenism and Christianity is unquestionable. Essenism urged on its disciples to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness: so Christ (Matt. vi. 33; Luke xii. 31). The Essenes forbade the laying up of treasures upon earth so Christ (Matt. vi. 19-21). The Essenes demanded of those who wished to join them to sell all their possessions, and to divide it among the poor brethren: so Christ (Matt. xix. 21; Luke xii. 33). The Essenes had all things in common, and appointed one of the brethren as steward to manage the common bag; so the primitive Christians (Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32-34; John xii. 6; xiii. 29). Essenism put all its members on the same level, forbidding the exercise of authority of one over the other, and enjoining mutual service; so Christ (Matt. xx. 25-28; Mark ix. 35-37; x. 42-45). Essenism commanded its disciples to call no man master upon the earth; so Christ (Matt. xxiii. 8-10). Essenism laid the greatest stress on being meek and lowly in spirit; so Christ (Matt. v. 5; xi. 29). Christ commended the poor in spirit, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers; so the Essenes. Christ combined the healing of the body with that of the soul; so the Essenes. Like the Essenes, Christ declared that the power to cast out evil spirits, to perform miraculous cures, &c., should be possessed by his disciples as signs of their belief (Mark xvi. 17; comp. also Matt. x. 8; Luke ix. 1, 2; x. 9). Like the Essenes, Christ commanded his disciples not to swear at all, but to say yea, yea, and nay, nay. The manner in which Christ directed his disciples to go on their journey (Matt. x. 9, 10) is the same which the Essenes adopted when they started on a mission of mercy. The Essenes, though repudiating offensive war, yet took weapons with them when they went on a perilous journey; Christ enjoined his disciples to do the same thing (Luke xxii. 36). Christ commended that elevated spiritual life, which enables

a man to abstain from marriage for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and which cannot be attained by all men save those to whom it is given (Matt. xix. 10-12 ; comp. also 1 Cor. viii.) ; so the Essenes who, as a body, in waiting for the kingdom of heaven (מלכות השמים) abstained from connubial intercourse. The Essenes did not offer animal sacrifices, but strove to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which they regarded as a reasonable service ; the Apostle Paul exhorts the Romans to do the same. (Rom. xii. 1). It was the great aim of the Essenes to live such a life of purity and holiness as to be the temples of the Holy Spirit, and to be able to prophesy : the apostle Paul urges the Corinthians to covet to prophesy (1 Cor. xiv. 1, 39). When Christ pronounced John *to be Elias* (Matt. xi. 14), he declared that the Baptist had already attained to that spirit and power which the Essenes strove to obtain in their highest stage of purity.<sup>7</sup> It will therefore hardly be doubted that our Saviour himself belonged to this holy brotherhood. This will especially be apparent when we remember that the whole Jewish community, at the advent of Christ, was divided into three parties, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes, and that every Jew had to belong to one of these sects. Jesus who, in all things, conformed to the Jewish law, and who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, would therefore naturally associate himself with that order of Judaism which was most congenial to his holy nature. Moreover, the fact that Christ, with the exception of once, was not heard of in public till his thirtieth year, implying that he lived in seclusion with this fraternity, and that though he frequently rebuked the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, he never denounced the Essenes, strongly confirms this conclusion. There can be no difficulty in admitting that the

<sup>7</sup> For the passages embodying the sentiments of the Essenes, which constitute the above comparisons, we must refer to the second part of this Essay and the notes.

Saviour of the world, who taught us lessons from the sparrows in the air, and the lilies in the field, and who made the whole realm of nature tributary to his teachings, would commend divine truth wherever it existed. But whilst Christ propounded some of the everlasting truths which were to be found less adulterated and practised more conscientiously among the Essenes than among the rest of the people, he repudiated their extremes. They were ascetics; he ate and drank the good things of God (Matt. xi. 19). They considered themselves defiled by contact with any one who practised a lower degree of holiness than their own; Christ associated with publicans and sinners, to teach them the way to heaven. They sacrificed the lusts of their flesh to gain spiritual happiness for themselves; Christ sacrificed himself for the salvation of others.

It is now impossible to ascertain the precise date when this order of Judaism first developed itself. According to Philo, Moses himself instituted this order; Josephus contents himself with saying that they existed "ever since the ancient time of the fathers;" whilst Pliny assures us that, without any one being born among them, the Essenes, incredible to relate, have prolonged their existence for *thousands of ages*.<sup>8</sup> Bating, however, these assertions, which are quite in harmony with the well known ancient custom of ascribing some pre-Adamite period to every religious or philosophical system, it must already have become apparent, from the description of it, that the very nature of the Essenes precludes the possibility of tracing its date. The fact that the Essenes developed themselves gradually, and at first imperceptibly, through intensifying the prevalent religious notions, renders it impossible to say with exactness at what degree of intensity they are to be considered as detached from the general body.

<sup>8</sup> Compare the account of Philo, p. 36; Pliny, p. 40; Josephus, p. 52; in the second part of this Essay.



The first mention we have of their existence is in the days of Jonathan the Maccabæan, B.C. 166. (*Joseph. Antiq.* xiii. 5, 8). We then hear of them again in the reign of Aristobulus I., B.C. 106, in connection with a prophecy about the death of Antigonus, uttered by Judas an Essene, of which Josephus gives the following account. "Judas, an Essene, whose predictions had up to this time never deceived, caused great astonishment on this occasion. When he saw at that time Antigonus pass through the temple, he called out to his disciples, of whom he had no small number—'Oh! it would be better for me to die now, since truth died before me, and one of my prophecies has proved false. Antigonus, who ought to have died this day, is alive; Strato's Tower, which is six hundred furlongs distance from here, is fixed for his murder, and it is already the fourth hour of the day [ten o'clock]; time condemns the prophecy as a falsehood.' Having uttered these words, the aged man sunk into a long, dejected, and sorrowing silence. Soon after, the report came that Antigonus was murdered in the subterranean passage which, like Cesarea on the sea side, was also called Strato's Tower. It was this circumstance that misled the prophet." (*Jewish War*, i. 3, § 5; *Antiq.* xiii. 11, § 2). The third mention of their existence we find in the well known prophecy of the Essene Manahem, uttered to Herod when a boy.<sup>9</sup> Now these accounts most unquestionably show that the Essenes existed at least two centuries before the Christian era, and that they at first lived amongst the Jewish community at large. Their residence at Jerusalem is also evident from the fact that there was a gate named after them ('Εσσηνῶν πύλη *Joseph. Jewish War*, v. 4, § 2). When they ultimately withdrew themselves from the rest of the Jewish nation, the majority of them settled on the north-west shore of the Dead Sea, sufficiently distant to escape its noxious exhalations, and the rest lived in scattered com-

<sup>9</sup> This prophecy is given in full in the second part of this Essay, p. 50.

munities throughout Palestine and Syria. Both Philo and Josephus estimated them to be above four thousand in number. This must have been exclusive of women and children. We hear very little of them after this period (i.e. 40 A.D.); and there can hardly be any doubt that, owing to the great similarity which existed between their precepts and practices and those of the primitive Christians, the Essenes as a body must have embraced Christianity.

Having ascertained the character of the Essenes, we shall be better prepared to investigate the origin of their name, which has been the cause of so much controversy, and which was not known even to Philo and Josephus. There is hardly an expression the etymology of which has called forth such a diversity of opinion as this name has elicited. The Greek and the Hebrew, the Syriac and the Chaldee, names of persons and names of places, have successively been tortured to confess the secret connected with this appellation, and there are no less, if not more, than *twenty different* explanations of it, which I shall give in chronological order. Philo tells us that some derived it from the Greek homonym *ἁγιότης holiness*, because the Essenes were above all others worshippers of God; but he rejects it as incorrect (*vide infra*, p. 32) without giving us another derivation. 2. Josephus does not expressly give any derivation of it, but simply says, "the third sect who really seem to practise holiness (*ὁ δὲ καὶ δοκεῖ σπουδαιότερα δοκεῖν*) are called Essenes." (*Vide infra* p. 41). From the addition, however, "who really seem to practise holiness or piety," Frankel<sup>10</sup> argues that the word must mean *holiness* or *piety*, because it appears to justify the name, and hence concludes that Josephus most probably took it to be the Hebrew *צנועים* or *חסידים*. Whilst Jost<sup>11</sup> is of opinion that Josephus derived it from the Chaldee *חשׂא* *to be silent, to be mysterious*,

10 Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interessen des Judenthums. Berlin, 1856, p. 449.

11 Geschichte des Judenthums und seiner Secten, vol. 1. Leipzig, 1857, p. 207.

because  $\text{שׁוּן}$  the high priest's breast-plate, for which the Septuagint has  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$  or  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\omicron\nu$  is translated by him  $\iota\omicron\sigma\eta\nu$ , or that he might have deduced this idea from  $\text{שׁוּן}$  itself, and traced it to  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$  or  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\omicron\nu$  as *endowed with the gift of prophecy*.<sup>12</sup> In Aboth of R. Nathan<sup>13</sup> it is written  $\text{עוֹשֵׂי תוֹעֵב}$  from  $\text{עוֹשֵׂי תוֹעֵב}$  to do, to perform, and accordingly denotes the performers of the law.

4. Epiphanius again calls them  $\text{Ὀσσαῖοι}$  and  $\text{Ὀσσηνοί}$  and tells us that it etymologically signifies  $\sigma\tau\epsilon\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu \gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  the stout or strong race, evidently taking it for  $\text{סִיבָּרִים}$  or  $\text{עוֹשֵׂי}$ . 5. In another place Epiphanius affirms that the Essenes borrowed their name from Jesse the father of David, or from Jesus, whose doctrines he ascribes to them; explaining the name Jesus to signify in Hebrew a physician; and calls them *Jesseans*.<sup>14</sup> In this he is followed by Petitus who makes them so related to David that they were obliged to take the name of his father Jesus or Jesse;<sup>15</sup> although Jesus does not signify physician but God-help. 6. Suidas (*Lex s. v.*) and Hilgenfeld (*Die jüdische Apokal. p. 278*), make it out to be the form  $\text{שׂוֹרֵר}$  =  $\sigma\omega\rho\eta\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$  seers, and the latter maintains that this name was given to them because they pretended to see visions and to prophesy. 7. Josippon b. Gorion<sup>16</sup> (*lib. iv. sects. 6, 7, p.p. 274 and 278, ed. Breithaupt*), and

12 As Mr. Westcott, the writer of the article *ΕΣΣΕΝΑΙ* in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, has misunderstood this passage and wrongly represented Jost himself as deriving this name from  $\text{שׁוּן}$  the silent, the mysterious, we give Jost's own words:—"Uns will scheinen, dass Josephus den Namen allerdings von  $\text{שׁוּן}$  *schweigen, geheimnissvoll sein*, ableitet; dahin führt seine Uebersetzung des Wortes  $\text{שׁוּן}$  in die griechischen Buchstaben  $\iota\omicron\sigma\eta\nu$  Ed. Hav. Ant. 1, 147, welches Wort die LXX  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$  übersetzen. Da das Wort  $\text{שׁוּן}$  seinen Zeitgenossen sehr geläufig war, so konnte er annehmen, dass man sich unter dem Namen der Sekte einen angemessenen Begriff dachte und er keiner Erläuterung bedürfe. Ja, es wäre möglich, dass er den Begriff aus  $\text{שׁוּן}$  selbst ableitet, und auf  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$  oder  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\omicron\nu$ , als mit Weissagung begabte, zurückführte. Vergleichte Gfrörer, Philo 1, 196."

13 Aboth di. R. Nathan, cap. xxxvi.

14 Comp. Epiphani. Haeres. xix. lib. i. tom. ii. sect. 4, p. 120, ed. Petav.

15 Comp. Petite Variæ Lectiones, c. xxviii. p. 2600.

16 Josippon b. Gorion also called *Gorionides*, lived in Italy about the middle of the tenth century. He is the compiler of the celebrated Hebrew Chronicle called *Josippon*, or the Hebrew Josephus. His real character and the value of his Chronicle are discussed under the article *JOSEPPON* in *Dr. Alexander's edition of Kitto's Cyclopadia of Biblical Literature*.

Gale (*Court of the Gentiles*, part ii., p. 147), take it for the Hebrew חסידים *the pious, the puritans*. 8. De Rossi<sup>17</sup> (*Meor Enaim*, 32 a), Gfrörer (*Philo*, ii. p. 341), Herzfeld (*Geschichte d. V. Israel* ii. p. 397), and others, insist that it is the Aramaic אסאי = *depaneutēs* *physician*, and that this name was given to them because of the spiritual or physical cures they performed. Indeed, De Rossi and Herzfeld will have it that the sect *Baitkusians* ביתוסים mentioned in the Talmud is nothing but a contraction of בית אסאי *the school or sect of physicians*, just as בית הלל stands for *the school of Hillel*. 9. Salmasius affirms that the Essenes derived their name from the town called *Essa*, situated beyond the Jordan, which is mentioned by Josephus (*Antiq.* xiii. 15, § 2), or from the place *Vadi Osis*.<sup>18</sup> 10. Rappaport (*Erech Milln*, p. 41), says that it is the Greek *isos* *an associate, a fellow of the fraternity*. 11. Frankel (*Zeitschrift*, 1846, p. 449, &c.), and others think that it is the Hebrew expression צנועים *the retired*. 12. Ewald (*Geschichte d. Volkes Israel*, iv. p. 420), is sure that it is the Rabbinic חזן *servant (of God)*, and that the name was given to them because it was their only desire to be *depaneutai* *deōi*. 13. Graetz (*Geschichte der Juden* iii. p. 468, second ed.) will have it that it is from the Aramaic סחא *to bathe*, with Aleph prostheticum, and that it is the shorter form for אסחאי טובלי שחרית = *hemerobaptists*; the Greek form 'Εσσαῖος, 'Εσσαῖος being nothing but Assaï or Essaï with ט elided. 14. Dr. Löw (*Ben Chananja* vol. i. p. 352) never doubts but that they were called *Essenes* after their founder, whose name he tells us was ישי, the disciple of Rabbi Joshua ben Perachja. 15. Dr. Adler (*Volkslehrer*, vi. p. 50), again submits that it is from the

<sup>17</sup> De Rossi, also called *Asarju min Ha-Adomim*, was born at Mantua in 1513, and died 1577. For an account of this eminent Jewish scholar, who may be regarded as the father of Biblical criticism at the time of the Reformation, see Dr. Alexander's edition of *Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, Article Rossi.

<sup>18</sup> Salmas. *Plinian. exercitat. in Solinum cap. xxxv. p. 432, edit. Ultraject.*

Hebrew **אָסַר** to bind together, to associate, and that they were called **אֲסָרִים** because they united together to keep the law. 16. Dr. Cohen suggests the Chaldee root **עָשַׁן** to be strong, and that they were called **עֲשִׂינִי** because of their strength of mind to endure sufferings and to subdue their passions. (*Comp. Frankel's Monatschrift* viii. p. 272). 17. Oppenheim thinks that it may be the form **עֲשִׂין** and stand for **עֲשִׂין מְדַרְתִּין** or **עֲשִׂין מְדַרְתִּין חֲטָאִין** observers of the laws of purity and holiness. (*Ibid*). 18. Jellinek (*Ben Chananya* iv. 374), again derives it from the Hebrew **חֲצִין** *sinus*, *πριζωμα*, alluding to the apron which the Essenes wore; whilst, 19, Others again derived it from **חֲסִיָּא** *pious*. The two last-mentioned explanations seem to have much to recommend them, they are natural and expressive of the characteristics of the brotherhood. I, however, incline to prefer the last, because it plainly connects the Essenes with an ancient Jewish brotherhood called *Chassidim* **חֲסִידִים** the pious, who preceded the Essenes, and from whom the latter took their rise. Those who wish to trace this connection, will find an article on the *Chassidim* in Dr. Alexander's edition of KITTO'S CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

## II.

I shall now give in chronological order the description of the Essenes found in the writings of Philo, Pliny, Josephus, Solinus, Porphyry, Eusebius and Epiphanius, and subjoin such notes as will explain the difficulties, and show the historical value of the respective documents.

As Philo is the oldest in point of time, we will begin with him. The exact date of the birth of this celebrated Jewish-Alexandrian philosopher is not known. It is, however, generally agreed that he was born in Alexandria between the years 20 and 1 B.C., and died about 60 A.D. Having resided all his lifetime in Alexandria, his information about the Essenes, who lived in Palestine, was derived from hearsay. This will account for some of the inaccuracies in his description of this remarkable brotherhood. He has given us two accounts of them, one in his treatise, entitled *Every Virtuous Man is Free*, and the other in his treatise, called *Apology for the Jews*. The latter is no longer extant, but Eusebius has preserved the fragments which speak of the Essenes in his work, entitled *Præparatio Evangelica* viii. 11. The description of the so-called contemplative Essenes, or Therapeutæ, which is generally appealed to as illustrating the doctrines and practices of the brotherhood in question, has nothing whatever to do with the real Palestinian Essenes; and it is almost certain that it is one of the many apocryphal productions fathered upon Philo, as may be seen from Graetz's elaborate and masterly analysis of it.<sup>1</sup> Philo's first account is contained in his treatise entitled *Every Virtuous Man is Free*, and is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

1 Comp. Graetz, Geschichte der Juden. Dritter Band, Zweite Auflage, Leipzig. 1863, p. 464, &c.; Frankel, Programm des jüdisch-theol. Seminars von 1834.

2 Comp. Philonis Opera, ed. Mangey. London, 1742, vol. ii. pp. 457-45.

"Palestine, and Syria too, which are inhabited by no slight portion of the numerous population of the Jews, are not barren of virtue. There are some among them called Essenes (*Ἐσσαῖοι*),—in number more than four thousand,—from, as I think, an incorrect derivation from the Greek homonym *hosiotes*, holiness (*παρώνυμοι ὁσιότητος*), because they are above all others worshippers of God (*θεραπευταὶ θεοῦ*). They do not sacrifice any animals, but rather endeavour to make their own minds fit for holy offering (*ἱεροπρεπεῖς διανοίας*).<sup>3</sup> They, in the first place, live in villages, avoiding cities on account of the habitual wickedness of the citizens, being sensible that as disease is contracted from breathing an impure atmosphere, so an incurable impression is made on the soul in such evil company.<sup>4</sup> Some of them cultivate the earth, others are engaged in those diverse arts which promote peace, thus

3 Josephus, who also mentions this fact, distinctly says that their not offering sacrifices in the temple is owing to the different degree of holiness which they practised. (*Vide infra* p. 228.) From the repeated declarations in the Bible, that a life of uniform obedience and faithful service is far more acceptable to God than the cattle of a thousand hills (1 Sam. xv. 22; Ps. xl. 6; 1. 7-14; li. 17; Prov. xxi. 3; Isa. i. 11, 17; lxv. 3; Jer. vii. 21-23; Hos. vi. 6; xiv. 2; Micah, vi. 6-8), the Essenes could easily be reconciled to their abstaining from offering animal sacrifices, and would be led to attach infinitely greater importance to the presenting of their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. (Comp. also Rom. xii. 1). This circumstance led Petitus to the conclusion that Herod, who was friendly to the Essenes in consequence of the favorable prophecy about him uttered by the Essene Menahem (*vide infra* p. 50), employed them to translate the Prophets and the Psalms into Greek, and that they availed themselves of the opportunity to introduce their tenets and rites into this version, now called the Septuagint. Thus, for instance, when David said "Sacrifice and burnt offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened" (Ps. xl. 6), the Essenes rendered it "Sacrifice and burnt offering thou dost not desire, but a body hast thou prepared me," interpolating three of their tenets. 1. They made the Prophet speak absolutely, as if God had entirely rejected sacrifices because they would offer him none. 2. By dropping the words, "mine ears hast thou opened," they showed their disapprobation of slavery. (Comp. Exod. xxi). And 3, by substituting "a body hast thou prepared me," they understood the college of devout Essenes, who met together as a body, and whom God appointed instead of sacrifice. Comp. Basnage, History of the Jews, English translation. London, 1708, p. 128.

4 This is not the only reason why the Essenes withdrew from cities. Their observance of the Levitical laws of purity which rendered them impure when they came in contact with those who did not live according to the same rules, was the principal cause of their living separately. (*Vide supra* p. 7, note 1.) Philo, however, states the first reason because the Greeks, for whom he wrote, understood it better than the second, which is so peculiarly Jewish in its character.

benefitting themselves and their neighbours. They do not lay up treasures of gold or silver,<sup>5</sup> nor do they acquire large portions of land out of a desire for revenues, but provide themselves only with the absolute necessities of life. Although they are almost the only persons of all mankind who are without wealth and possessions—and this by their own choice rather than want of success—yet they regard themselves as the richest, because they hold that the supply of our wants, and contentment of mind, are riches, as in truth they are.<sup>6</sup>

“No maker of arrows, darts, spears, swords, helmets, breast-plates, or shields—no manufacturer of arms or engines of war, nor any man whatever who makes things belonging to war, or even such things as might lead to wickedness in times of peace, is to be found among them.<sup>7</sup> Traffic, innkeeping, or navigation, they never so much as dream of, because they repudiate every inducement to covetousness. There is not a single slave to be found among them, for all are free, and mutually serve each other. They condemn owners of slaves, not only as unjust, inasmuch as they corrupt the principle of equality, but also as impious, because they destroy the law of nature, which like a mother brought forth and nourished all alike, and made them all legitimate brethren, not only in word but in deed; but this relationship, treacherous covetousness, rendered overbearing by success, has destroyed by engendering enmity instead of cordiality, and hatred instead of love.

“They leave the logical part of philosophy, as in no respect necessary for the acquisition of virtue, to the word catchers; and the natural part, as being too difficult for human nature, to the astrological babblers, excepting that part of it which treats upon the existence of God and the origin of the

<sup>5</sup> The same thing Christ urged on his disciples. Comp. Matth. vi. 19-21.

<sup>6</sup> This simple desire for the supply of our daily bread, and the contentment of mind here spoken of, are also commended by our Saviour. (Matth. vi. 11, 25-34.)

<sup>7</sup> Believing that all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Comp. Matth. xxvi. 52.



universe;<sup>8</sup> but the ethical part they thoroughly work out themselves, using as their guides the laws which their fathers inherited, and which it would have been impossible for the human mind to devise without divine inspiration. Herein they instruct themselves at all times, but more especially on the seventh day. For the seventh day is held holy, on which they abstain from all other work, and go to the sacred places called synagogues, sit according to order, the younger below the elder, and listen with becoming attention. Then one takes the Bible and reads it, and another of those who have most experience comes forward and expounds it, passing over that which is not generally known, for they philosophise on most things in symbols according to the ancient zeal.

"They are instructed in piety, holiness, righteousness, economy, politics, in knowledge of what is truly good, bad and indifferent, to choose things that are necessary, and to avoid the contrary. They use therein a threefold rule and definition, viz. : love of God, love of virtue, and love of mankind.<sup>9</sup> Of their love to God, they give innumerable demonstrations—*e.g.* their constant and unalterable holiness (ἀγνεία) throughout the whole of their life; their avoidance of oaths<sup>10</sup> and falsehoods, and their firm belief that God is the source of all good, but of nothing evil. Of their love of virtue they give proofs in their contempt for money, fame, and pleasures,

8 The Apostle Paul, too, admonished the Colossians to "beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy." (Col. ii. 8.)

9 Thus also Christ, when he was asked which was the greatest commandment in the law, declared, love to God and love to our neighbour, and that on these two hang all the law and the prophets. (Comp. *Math.* xxii. 36-40.)

10 Although the taking of oaths was discountenanced by the Jews generally (*Comp. Eccles.* xiii. 11, &c.; and especially *Philo De decem oraculis* § 17, *Opp.* Tom. ii. p. 104, &c., ed. Mangey); and the Pharisees took great care to abstain as much as possible from using them (*Comp. Shevuoth* 39, b; *Gittin* 35, a; *Bemidbar Rabba* c. xxii); yet the Essenes were the only order who laid it down as a principle not to swear at all, but to say yea, yea, and nay, nay. So firmly and conscientiously did they adhere to it that Herod, who on ascending the throne had exacted an oath of allegiance from all the rest of the Jews, was obliged to absolve the Essenes from it. (*Comp. Joseph. Antiq.* book xv. chap. x. § 4). Christ too, laid it down as a principle for his disciples not to swear at all, but to say yea, yea, and nay, nay. (*Comp. Math.* v. 33-37.)

their continence, endurance, in their satisfying their wants easily, simplicity, cheerfulness of temper, modesty, order, firmness, and every thing of the kind. As instances of their love to man, are to be mentioned their benevolence, equality, and their having all things in common, which is beyond all description, and about which it will not be out of place to speak here a little.

"First, then, no one has his own house, so that it also belongs to all. For, besides that, they all live together in sodalities; it is also open to those of the brotherhood who come from other places. Moreover, they have all one common treasury and store of provisions, common garments, and common food for all who eat together. Such a mode of sleeping together, living together, and eating together, could not be so easily established in fact among any other people; and indeed it would be impossible. For whatever they receive daily, if they work for wages, they do not retain it as their own, but give it to the common stock, and let every one that likes make common use of it.<sup>11</sup> Those that are sick are not neglected because they can earn nothing, but have what is necessary for their aid from the common stock, so that they ever fare richly without wanting anything. They manifest respect, reverence and care for the aged, just as children do for their parents, administering to them a thousand times with all plentifulness both with their hands and their counsels in their old age.

"Such champions of virtue does a philosophy produce which is free from the subtlety of Greek word-splitting, and which deals with subjects tending to the exercise of praiseworthy actions, and giving rise to invincible freedom. This was seen in the fact that many tyrants have arisen from time to time in that country, differing in character and conduct.

<sup>11</sup> This community of goods was also adopted by the early Christians, who, as we are told, "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every man needed."—(Comp. Acts, ii. 45, iv. 34, 35.)

Some of them endeavoured to surpass in ferocity wild beasts; they omitted no manner of barbarity, they sacrificed the vanquished in whole troops, or, like butchers, cut off pieces and limbs of those that were still living, and did not leave off till retributive justice, which governs the affairs of man, plunged them into similar miseries. Others, again, converted their frenzy and madness into a different kind of wickedness. They adopted an inexpressible bitterness, spake gently, and betrayed a ferocious temper under the mask of gentle language;<sup>12</sup> they fawned like poisonous dogs, and brought about irremediable miseries, leaving behind them in the cities, as monuments of their impiety and hatred of mankind, the never to be forgotten miseries. But neither the cruel tyrant nor the wily hypocrite could get any advantage over the said brotherhood of Essenes or *holy ones* (Ἐσσηῶν ἢ ὁσίων), but disarmed by the virtues of these men, all recognised them as independent and free by nature, praised their common meals and their community of goods, which surpasses all description, and is an evident proof of a perfect and very happy life."

Philo's second account, which has been preserved by Eusebius in his *Praep. Evang.*, viii, 11, from the lost treatise entitled *Apology for the Jews*, is as follows:—<sup>13</sup>

"Our lawgiver, Moses, formed innumerable (μυττοις) disciples into a fellowship called Essenes,<sup>14</sup> who, as it appears, obtained this appellation by virtue of their holiness (παρὰ τὴν ὁσιότητα). They dwell in many cities of Judea, and in villages, and

12 The account here given of the sufferings of the Essenes bears a very striking resemblance to the description in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* xi. 30-38; and it may be that the Apostle refers to this extraordinary brotherhood.

13 This fragment which Eusebius has preserved is given in Philo's Works, ed. Mangey, vol. ii., p. 622, seq.

14 The tracing of this brotherhood to Moses is in accordance with the practice which generally prevailed among the Jews of ascribing the origin of every law, mystical doctrine or system, which came into vogue in the course of time, either to Ezra, Moses, Noah or Adam. Thus we are told in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Pea*, ii. 6), and the Midrash (*Coheloth*, 96 d.), that all the Scriptural learning which developed itself in course of time, and everything which a *Talmid Vatie* might bring to light, were revealed to Moses beforehand on Mount Sinai.

in large and populous communities. Their order is not founded upon natural descent, but upon admiration for virtue and sincere love for man. Hence there are properly speaking no newly born ones among the Essenes, no children, no youths, as the dispositions of these are unstable and liable to change from the imperfections incident to their age;<sup>15</sup> but they are all full grown men who are already approaching old age; and are no longer carried away by the impetuosity of their bodily passions, but possess the genuine and the only true and real liberty. A proof of their freedom is to be found in their life. None of them strives to acquire any private property, house, slave, farm, flocks, herds, or anything which might be regarded as a source of riches, but they all give everything to the common stock from which the common wants of all are alike supplied.

“They all dwell together in the same place, form themselves into companies, societies, combinations and unions,<sup>16</sup> and work together all their life for the common good of the brotherhood. The different members of the order are engaged in different employment; they work cheerfully and industriously, and never try to leave their employment on account of cold, heat, or any change of weather. They go to their daily work before the sun rises, and do not leave off till some time after it has set, when they return home rejoicing no less than those who have been exercising themselves in gymnastic contests.<sup>17</sup> They believe that their employment is a sort of gymnastic exercise of more benefit to life, greater pleasure both to soul and body, and of a more enduring advantage than any mere athletic labours, because they can cheerfully continue in their

15 This refers to juvenile members of the fraternity, as the Essenes did adopt children, and trained them up to the practices of the order. *Vide infra* p. 41.

16 The four companies here mentioned most probably refer to the four different classes into which the Essenes were divided, described more minutely by Josephus. *Vide infra*, p. 47, note 45.

17 So also the Apostle Paul recommends us not to be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.—(Rom. xii. 11.)

work as a recreation even when youth and bodily strength are gone. Those who are acquainted with the cultivation of the land are engaged in agriculture ; others, again, who understand the management of animals, attend to the flocks ; some are skilful in the management of bees ; and others again, are artizans and manufacturers, thus guarding against the want of anything. They do not omit anything which is requisite to supply the absolute necessities of life.

"The appointed steward and general manager receives the wages which the different people get for their respective employments, and forthwith buys plenty of food and other necessaries of life. They eat at the same table, and have every day the same food, being lovers of frugality and moderation, and averse to luxury and extravagance as a disease of both mind and body. Not only is their table in common, but their dress too is in common. They have a store of rough cloaks in the winter, and in the summer cheap garments without sleeves, to which every one can go and freely take whichever kind he wants, for whatever belongs to one belongs to all, and whatever belongs to all belongs to each individual.

"If one of them is sick, he is cured from the common resources, and is attended to by the general care and anxiety of the whole body. The old men, even if they happen to be childless,<sup>18</sup> end their lives in a most happy, prosperous and tenderly cared for old age, as if they were not only the fathers of many children, but were even also particularly happy in an affectionate offspring. They are looked upon by such a number of people as worthy of so much honour and provident regard, that they think themselves bound to care for them even more from inclination than from any tie of natural affection.

"Perceiving, with more than ordinary acuteness and accuracy, what is alone, or at least above all other things, calculated

<sup>18</sup> That is if he belongs to the class of Essenes who practised celibacy ; for there were those among them who had wives and families. *Vide infra* p. 49.

to dissolve such connections, they repudiate marriage; and at the same time practice continence in an eminent degree. For no one of the Essenes marries a wife, because woman is a selfish and excessively jealous creature, and has great power to destroy the morals of man, and to mislead with continual tricks; for she is always devising flattering speeches and other kinds of hypocrisy as on a stage; bewitching the eyes and the ears; and when they are subjugated like things stultified, she proceeds to undermine the ruling intellect.<sup>19</sup>

"But when she has children, the woman becomes full of pride and arrogance, audaciously speaks out that which she previously merely indicated in treacherous disguise, and without any shame compels one to do whatever is hostile to the brotherhood; for he who is chained by the charms of a woman or cares for children by necessity of nature, is no longer the same person to others, but is entirely changed, having unawares become a slave instead of a free man.

19 The Mosaic law regards conjugal intercourse as polluting, and enjoins bathing after it (Levit. xv. 18.) Hence, when the children of Israel had to sanctify themselves in the highest degree, so as to be fit to receive the law from Mount Sinai, they were commanded not to approach their wives (Exod. xix. 15). Hence, also, those who had the charge of the shew-bread polluted the sacred loaves by going to their wives (1 Sam. xxi. 4). And hence the remark of the Apostle Paul, that in order to give themselves to fasting and prayer, man and wife may keep aloof from each other by mutual consent (1 Cor. vii. 5). The same laws obtained among all nations of antiquity. Thus, among the Egyptians, Babylonians, Arabians, Greeks and Romans, both man and wife had to bathe after connubial intercourse (*Herod.* i. 188). No one was allowed to go after it to the temple without bathing (*Herod.* ii. 64; *Suet. Aug.* xciv. 5; *Pers.* ii. 50, &c.); and the priests had to abstain from approaching their wives when they were ministering in holy things (*Porphyrius, de Abstinencia*, lib. ii. 50; iv. 7; *Plutarch. Sympos.* iii. 6; *Tibul.* lib. ii. Eleg. 1, 11, &c.; *Ovid. Metam.* x. 434, &c.) Now, as the Essenes strove to be in a perpetual state of sanctification, regarded their refectory as a sanctuary and their meals as sacraments, and most anxiously avoided contact with every thing that defiled, they had of necessity to extend these Mosaic laws, which enjoin abstinence from connubial intercourse as a means of sanctification, and which regard those who indulged in it as defiled, to the whole course of their life; and they had therefore to be celibates. This extension of the Mosaic law was moreover deemed desirable in consequence of the general conviction which the Jews entertained, in common with other nations, that no woman remains faithful to her husband, and that they all defile the bed of marriage. Philo, in the passage before us, and Josephus, as we shall see afterwards (*vide infra* p. 41, § 2), only give the latter reason, to suit their Greek readers who could both understand it better and sympathise with it more than with the former.

"Such is the enviable system of life of the Essenes, so that not only private individuals but even mighty kings have admired them, venerated their brotherhood, and rendered their dignity and nobleness still higher by the praise and honours which they lavished upon them."

Next, in point of time, is Caius Plinius Secundus, called Major, or the elder, the celebrated author of the *Historia Naturalis*, who was born in A.D. 23, and died A.D. 79. Pliny's notice of the Essenes, which is to be found in his Natural History, book v., chap. xvii., is as follows :

"Towards the west [of the sea] and sufficiently distant from it, so as to escape its noxious exhalations (*ab occidente litora Esseni fugiunt, usque qua nocent*), are the Essenes. They are a hermitical society, marvellous beyond all others throughout the whole earth. They live without any women, without gratifying sensual desires, without money, and in the company of palm trees. Their ranks are daily made up by multitudes of new comers who resort to them ; and who being weary of life, and driven by the surges of ill-fortune, adopt their manner of life. Thus it is that, through thousands of ages (*per saeculorum millia*),<sup>20</sup> incredible to relate, this people prolongs its existence without any one being born among them : so fruitful to them are the weary lives of others."

Next in point of time is Josephus, or Joseph ben Matthias, better known by the name Flavius Josephus, who was born in Jerusalem about 37, A.D. The description which this learned Jewish warrior and historian gives us of the Essenes, although somewhat marred by being made to harmonise with the systems of Greek philosophy, is very important, inasmuch as Josephus was not only a Palestinian Jew, but at one period of his life had actually joined the brotherhood. He tells us in his autobiography, that when sixteen years old he determined to

<sup>20</sup> This is simply a repetition of what the Essenes themselves said about their origin, in accordance with a common practice among the Jews.—*Vide supra* p. 30, note 14.

examine for himself the respective merits of the three predominant sects, viz., of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, with the view of making a selection from among them. His accounts of the Essenes are dispersed through his works. The following is the first description contained in his *Jewish War*, book ii, chap. viii, sec. 2—13.

“§ 2. There are three sects of philosophers among the Jews. The followers of the first are called Pharisees, of the second Sadducees, and of the third, who really seem to practise holiness, Essènes.<sup>21</sup> Jews by birth, they love each other more than the others.<sup>22</sup> They reject pleasure as an evil, and regard continence and not yielding to passions as virtues. They despise marriage, and adopt the children of others while still tender and susceptible of instruction,<sup>23</sup> and regard them as their own relations, and train them in their practices. They do not, however, repudiate marriage, and its consequent succession of the race in themselves; but they are afraid of the lasciviousness of women, and are persuaded that none of them preserve their fidelity to one man.<sup>24</sup>

“§ 3. They despise riches, have all things in common in a very admirable manner, and there is not one to be found among them who is richer than another; for it is a law that those who enter the sect must give up their possessions to the

21 This representation of the three Jewish sects as different philosophical schools, and the supposed resemblance of the Essenes to the Pythagoreans, which he mentions afterwards, (*vide infra Antiq.* xv. 10; § 4, p. 50) and which have misled modern writers, are nothing but a desire on the part of Josephus to make the divers teachings of his co-religionists correspond to the different systems of Greek philosophy. It is this anxiety to shew the Gentiles, for whom he wrote, how much the Jews resemble them both in doctrine and practice, which detracts from the merits of Josephus' history.

22 This love for the brotherhood, which the Essenes possessed to so extraordinary a degree, was also urged by the Evangelists and Apostles on the early Christians (comp. John xiv. 17; Rom. xiii. 8; 1 Tim. iv. 9; 1 Peter i. 28 xi. 17; 1 John iii. 23; iv. 7, 11; v. 2).

23 This does not contradict Philo's remark (*vide supra* p. 37), as Herzfeld supposes, (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vol ii. p. 375); since the two statements refer to two different things. The former affirms that they do not receive children into the noviciate, whilst the latter speaks of their adopting and educating them, which is a distinct thing from *becoming a novice*.

24 *Vide supra*, p. 39, note 19.



society as common property,<sup>25</sup> so that there is not to be seen among them all, either the abjectness of poverty or the distinction of riches ; but as every man's goods are cast into a common treasury, they all, like brothers, have one patrimony. They regard ointment as defiling ; and if one happens to be anointed against his will, he immediately wipes it off his body.<sup>26</sup> To be unadorned but dressed in white they regard as commendable. They have stewards of their common property, appointed by general election, and every one without distinction is proposed for all the offices.

“ § 4. They have no separate city, but some of them live anywhere ; and if any of the society come from other places, whatever they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own ; and they go to those whom they have never seen before as if they had been most intimate. Hence they take nothing with them when they go on a journey,<sup>27</sup> but arms for defence against robbers. A steward is appointed in every city of this order to provide strangers with clothes and other necessities.<sup>28</sup> The keeping and appearance of their body are such as of children brought up in fear ; they change neither garments nor shoes till they are worn out or made unfit by time.<sup>29</sup> They neither sell nor buy anything among themselves, but everyone gives of that which he has to him that wants, and gets from

<sup>25</sup> So our Lord urged on the young man, who lived so exemplary a life in the performance of God's law, and whom he loved, that unless he gave up his property he could not follow him (comp. Matth. xix. 21 ; Mark x. 21 ; Luke xviii. 22), and commanded his disciples to sell all their possessions and distribute the money among the poor (comp. Luke xii. 33.)

<sup>26</sup> Ointment being a luxury (comp. Eccl. ix. 8 ; Dan. x. 2), the Essenes regarded the use of it as extravagance, and contrary to the simplicity of their manner of life.

<sup>27</sup> The manner in which Christ commanded his disciples to depart on their journey (Mark vi. 8-10) is the same which these pious Essenes are here said to have adopted. This also explains the injunction given by our Saviour to his disciples in Luke xxii. 36, about taking arms with them, which has so greatly perplexed commentators who were unacquainted with the customs of the Essenes.

<sup>28</sup> The Pharisees, too, had a steward in every place to supply the needy with clothing and food. (*Comp. Pea viii. 7 ; Baba Bathra 8 a ; Sabbath 118.*)

<sup>29</sup> Comp. also Luke x. 4, &c.

him that which he needs; and even without requital they can freely take whatever they want.

“§ 5. Their piety towards God is extraordinary, for they never speak about worldly matters before the sun rises, but offer up, with their faces towards it, some of the prayers transmitted by their forefathers, as if they supplicated it to rise.<sup>30</sup> Hereupon, they are all sent by the overseers, every one to work in the department in which he is skilled; and, having diligently laboured till the fifth hour, assemble again together in one place, girt round with their linen apron, and have a baptism with cold water.<sup>31</sup> After this lustration they resort to a special house, in which no one of another faith is admitted, and go to the refectory purified as into a holy temple.<sup>32</sup> Having quietly taken their seats the baker gives every one a loaf of bread according to order, and the cook places before each one a dish with one sort of food. The priest commences with prayer, and no one is allowed to taste his food before grace is said. He also returns thanks after the meal; for both at the commencement and at the conclusion they praise God as the giver of their food.<sup>33</sup>

30 Some translate it “they offer prayer (εἰς τὸν ἥλιον) to the sun.” But it is utterly inconceivable that the Essenes, who were such thorough Jews, and so exemplary for their adoration of the Holy One of Israel, would be guilty of idolatry by worshipping the sun. Besides, the prayer in question is described as one transmitted by the fathers. And can it be imagined that there existed among the Jews a national prayer to this luminary in direct violation of the first commandment, and of what is so expressly forbidden in Deut. iv. 10? The prayer therefore here spoken of is the well known national morning hymn of praise (הַשְׁמִיחַ לַיּוֹם) for the return of the light of the day, which still forms a part of the Jewish service to the present day. Comp *Berachoth* 9 b; *Rappaport in the Bikure Ha-Ittim*, vol. x., Vienna 1829, p. 115, and *infra* p. 69.

31 This practice of bathing before meals was also common among the Pharisees (comp. *Chagiga*, 18, b), and as the Essenes covered themselves with their aprons so the Pharisees put on their *Talith* during their baptisms. (Comp. *Berachoth* 24, b.)

32 The Pharisees, too, regarded the refectory as a sanctuary, and compared its table to the altar in the temple, because the altar in the temple is represented as the table of the Lord (Ezekiel xli, 22). Hence, R. Jochanan and R. Eleazar remark—“As long as the temple stood the altar atoned for the sins of Israel, but now it is man's table which atones for his sins.” (*Talmud Berachoth*. 55a). Hence the Chaldee paraphrase of Ezekiel xii. 22, and the remarks of Rashi and Kimchi on this passage, which cannot be understood unless this traditional interpretation is borne in mind. Comp. also *Aboth* iii, 3.

33 This was also the practice of the Pharisees, and is to the present day the custom among the orthodox Jews.

Whereupon they put off their white garments as if they were sacred, and betake themselves again to their work till evening. On returning again they take their supper together, at which strangers, who happen to be in the place, are allowed to sit down with them. No noise or tumult ever desecrates their house, but they let every one take part in the conversation in turn; and the silence of those who are within appears to those that are without as some awful mystery. The cause of this is the uninterrupted sobriety, as well as the fact that their eating and drinking are so measured out as just to suffice the cravings of nature.

“§ 6. Whilst they do nothing without the injunctions of their overseers, yet there are two things in which they have free action, viz., helping the needy, and shewing mercy; to help the deserving when they are in want, and to give food to the hungry, they have perfect liberty; but to give anything to their relations they are not allowed without the permission of the overseers. They are just dispensers of their anger, curbers of their passions, representatives of fidelity, ministers of peace; and every word with them is of more force than an oath. They avoid taking an oath, and regard it as worse than perjury; for they say that he who is not believed without calling on God to witness is already condemned of falsehood.<sup>34</sup> They take extraordinarily great pains in studying the writings of the ancients, and select that especially which is beneficial both for the soul and body; hence they investigate medical roots and the property of minerals for the cure of distempers.<sup>35</sup>

“§ 7. When any one desires to enter the sect, he is not immediately admitted, but although he has to remain a whole

<sup>34</sup> This paragraph almost embodies the sentiments uttered by our Saviour in *Matth. chap. v.*

<sup>35</sup> These ancient books on magical cures and exorcisms were the reputed works of Solomon, who, according to the Talmud as well as the Byzantine and Arabian writers, composed treatises on miraculous cures and driving out evil spirits. (*Comp. Pesachim 56 a; Fabricius, Codex pseudepigraphus Vet. Test. p. 1042, &c.; Weil, Biblische Legenden der Muselmänner, p. 225-279*). Josephus tells

year without, yet he is obliged to observe their ascetic rules of living, and they give him an axe, an apron as mentioned above, and a white garment.<sup>36</sup> If he has given proof of continence during this time, he approaches nearer to their life and partakes of the holier water of purification; but is still not as yet admitted to their common table. Having thus given proof of his perseverance, his conduct is tested two more years, and, if found worthy, he is admitted into the society. But before he touches the common meal, he swears, by most awful oaths,<sup>37</sup> first to fear God, and next to exercise justice towards all men—neither to wrong any one of his own accord nor by the command of others; always to detest the wicked and side with the righteous; ever to keep faith inviolable with all men, especially with those in authority, for no one comes to office without the will of God;<sup>38</sup> not to be proud of his power nor to outshine his subordinates, either in his garments or greater finery, if he himself should

us elsewhere that some of these Solomonic productions still existed in his own days, and that he had actually seen demons driven out and people cured by their aid. (*Comp. Antiq.* book viii. chap. ii. § 6.) This account most strikingly illustrates what Christ says in *Matth.* xii. 27.

36 This custom has its origin in the extension of a Mosaic law. The hosts of the Lord are commanded in *Deut.* xxiii 13, 15, to have spades among the martial instruments in order to bury therewith their excrements without the camp, and thus to keep themselves pure from every pollution, and to be a holy camp, because the Holy One of Israel dwells in the midst thereof. Now as the Essenes strove to be, in a pre-eminent sense, the spiritual hosts of the Lord, every one of them was obliged to have this spade in order to guard their sacred camp from defilement. For this reason the apron was also given to cover their nakedness in their numerous baptisms, and thus to keep their thoughts from dwelling upon anything which might lead to impurity; whilst the white garment was the symbol of their holiness. This, however, was not peculiar to the Essenes, as the Talmud tells us that when any one applied to become a member of the Pharisaic order (חזר), he had to pass through a noviciate of twelve months, at the expiration of which he received a sort of garment called כנפים, and having duly qualified himself in this stage, he was afterwards admitted to the holier lustrations (סבלין לשדירות). (*Comp. Tosiftu Demai* c. 11; *Jerusalem Demai* ii. 3; *Babylonian Becharoth* 30, 6).

37 This was the only occasion on which the Essenes were permitted to take an oath.

38 This does not refer to governments generally, as Gfrörer will have it (*Philo und die jüdisch-alexandrinische Theosophie*, vol. ii, p. 333, &c.), but to the office of overseer or steward among the brotherhood, as is evident from the immediately following statement, which most unquestionably pledges every Essene to retain his simplicity of character if he should ever attain to any official position or stewardship in the order.

attain to office ; always to love truth and strive to reclaim all liars ; to keep his hands clear from stealing, and his mind from unholy gain ; not to conceal anything from the brotherhood, nor disclose anything belonging to them to those without, though it were at the hazard of his life. He has, moreover, to swear not to communicate to any one their doctrines in any other way than he has received them ;<sup>39</sup> to abstain from robbing the commonwealth ; and equally to preserve the writings of the society and the names of the angels.<sup>40</sup> By such oaths they bind those who enter the brotherhood.

“§ 8. Such as are caught in heinous sins are excommunicated from the society ; and the excommunicated frequently die a miserable death. For, being bound by oaths and customs, they cannot receive food from any out of the society, so that they are forced to eat herbs till, their bodies being famished with hunger, they perish.<sup>41</sup> Hence they compassionately receive many of them again when they are at their last gasp, thinking that suffering, approaching unto death, is sufficient for their sins.

“§ 9. In their verdicts they are most exact and just, and never give sentence if there are less than a hundred of the

39 This is not peculiar to the Essenes. The Pharisees, too, would not indiscriminately propound the mysteries of the cosmogony and the theosophy, which, according to them, are contained in the history of the Creation and in the vision of Ezekiel, except to those who were regularly initiated in the order. Comp. Mishna Chagiga, ii, 1.

40 This evidently refers to the secrets of the *Tetragrammaton*, and the angelology which played so important a part among the Jewish mystics from time immemorial. Comp. Wisdom of Solomon vii. 20 ; Mishna Chagiga, ii, 1.

41 The reason why he ate herbs and not bread, or the simple dish which the order generally took, is that, being bound by an oath to observe the practices of the brotherhood, he could only accept meals from those who lived according to the highest degree of purity (על בדרת חסאת), and who, as a matter of course, kept their meals according to this degree. But as such a mode of life was of very uncommon occurrence, the excommunicated Essene was obliged to live on herbs or vegetables which he had to pluck himself ; for, according to the Talmud, plants are only then considered unclean when they are cut off and water is poured upon them (משדוכשור לקבל ביומא כשנהלשו). As for Josephus' saying that he died a miserable death, and that he could only eat grass (ποιησάγων), this is simply another instance of his exaggerating and colouring his subject.

brotherhood present : but what is then decreed is irrevocable. Next to God they have the highest veneration for the name of the lawgiver, Moses, and punish with death any one who blasphemes it. To submit to the elders and to the majority they regard as a duty : hence, when ten of them sit together, no one will speak if the other nine do not agree to it. They avoid spitting before the face, or to the right hand,<sup>42</sup> and are also stricter than all other Jews not to touch any labour on the Sabbath day—for they not only prepare their Sabbath-day's food the day before, that they may not kindle a fire on that day, but they will not move a vessel out of its place<sup>43</sup> nor go to ease nature. On all other days they dig a pit of a foot deep with the spade (such an one being given to the novice), and having covered it all round with a cover, that it may not offend the Divine rays, they set themselves over it, and then put the earth that was dug out again into the pit ; and do this, after having chosen the most lonely places. And although the voiding of bodily excrements is natural, yet it is their custom to bathe after it, as if they had been defiled.<sup>44</sup>

“ § 10. They are divided, according to the time of leading this mode of life, into four different classes, and the juniors are so much inferior to the seniors, that the latter must wash themselves when they happen to touch the former, as if they had been defiled by a stranger.<sup>45</sup> They live to a great age, so

42 The Pharisees, too, regarded ten persons as constituting a complete number for divine worship, held the assembling of such a number as sacred, and would not spit in their presence. (*Comp. Berachoth* 54 a ; *Jerusalem Berachoth* iii. 5 ; *Aboth* iii. 8.)

43 This is not peculiar to the Essenes : for the Pharisees, too, would not remove a vessel on the Sabbath (*comp. Tosifla Succa*, iii) ; and the orthodox Jews, to the present day, will not even carry a handkerchief on the Sabbath ; they tie it round the body to serve as a girdle, so that it might not be said that they carry the weight of even so small a thing on the sacred day. *Comp. also* Mark xi, 16.

44 Neither is this peculiar to the Essenes ; for not only did the Pharisees of old do the same (*comp. Ioma* 28, a) : but the orthodox Jews of the present day wash after performing the duties of nature.

45 This division of the brotherhood into four classes, as well as the impurity contracted by the higher class when touching one who belonged to a lower class of purity, also existed among the Pharisees. (*Vide supra*, p. 7, note 1.)

that many of them live to above a hundred years—arising from the simplicity of their diet, as it appears to me, and from their order. They despise suffering, and overcome pain by fortitude. Death, if connected with honour, they look upon as better than long life. Of the firmness of their minds in all cases the war with the Romans has given ample proof; in which, though they were tortured, racked, burned, squeezed, and subjected to all the instruments of torment, that they might be forced to blaspheme the lawgiver or eat what was forbidden, yet they could not be made to do either of them; nor would they even once flatter their tormentors or shed a tear, but, smiling through their torments and mocking their tormentors, they cheerfully yielded up their souls, as those who would soon receive them back again.<sup>46</sup>

“§ 11. For they firmly believe that the bodies perish and their substance is not enduring, but that the souls are immortal—continue for ever and come out of the most subtile ether—are enveloped by their bodies, to which they are attracted through a natural inclination, as if by hedges—and that when freed from the bonds of the body, they, as if released from a long servitude, rejoice and mount upwards. In harmony with the opinion of the Greeks,<sup>47</sup> they say that for the good souls there is a life beyond the ocean, and a region which is never molested either with showers or snow or intense heat—is always refreshed with the gentle gales of wind constantly breathing from the ocean; whilst to the wicked souls they assign a dark and cold corner, full of never-ceasing punishments. And it seems to be according to the same opinion that the Greeks assigned to their valiant men, whom they called heroes and demigods, the Island of the Blessed, but to the souls of the wicked the regions of the impious in Hades;

<sup>46</sup> Philo, too, speaks of this fact. (*Vide supra* p. 36.)

<sup>47</sup> This is another instance of the anxiety of Josephus to make the different phases of Judaism harmonise with the Greek mode of thinking.

as also their fables speak of several there punished, as Sisyphus and Tantalus and Ixion and Tityus. This they teach, partly because they believe that the souls are immortal, and partly for the encouragement of virtue and the discouragement of vice. For good men are made better in their lives by the hope of reward after their death, whilst the passions of the wicked are restrained by the fear they are in that, although they should be concealed in this life, after death they must suffer everlasting punishment. This is the doctrine of the Essenes about the soul—possessing thereby an irresistible bait for those who have once tasted their philosophy.

“§ 12. There are also some among them who undertake to foretell future events, having been brought up from their youth in the study of the sacred Scripture, in divers purifications, and in the sayings of the prophets; and it is very seldom that they fail in their predictions.

“§ 13. There is also another order of Essenes who, in their way of living, customs, and laws exactly agree with the others, excepting only that they differ from them about marriage. For they believe that those who do not marry cut off the principal part of human life—that is, succession—especially that, if all were of the same opinion, the whole race would soon be extinguished. They, however, try their spouses for three years, and after giving evidence, by three natural purgations, that they are fit to bear children, they marry them. They have no connubial intercourse with them when with child, to show that they do not marry to gratify lust, but only to have children. The women, too, have their garments on when they have baths, just as the men have on their aprons. Such are the customs of this brotherhood.”

The next mention which Josephus makes of them is in his *Antiq.* Book xiii. chap. v. § 9, and is as follows:—

“§ 9. At this time [166 B.C.] there were three sects (*αἱρέσεις*)



among the Jews, differing in their opinion about human affairs. The first was called the sect of the Pharisees, the second the sect of the Sadducees, and the third the sect of the Essenes. The Pharisees affirm that some things only, but not all, are the work of fate (τῆς εἰμαρμένης), and some are in our own power, whether they should take place or whether they should not occur; the sect of the Essenes maintain that fate governs all things,<sup>48</sup> and that nothing can befall man contrary to its determination and will (ψήφος); whilst the Sadducees reject fate, saying that there is no such thing, and that human events do not proceed from it, and ascribe all to ourselves, so that we ourselves are the cause of our fortunes, and receive what is evil from our own inconsiderateness. However, I have given a more minute description of this in the second book of the Jewish War."

He speaks of them again in Antiq. Book xv. chap. x. § 4, towards the end, and § 5, as follows:—

"§ 4. The Essenes, as we call them, were also exempted from this necessity [of taking an oath of allegiance to Herod]. These men live the same kind of life which among the Greeks has been ordered by Pythagoras.<sup>49</sup> I have discoursed more fully about them elsewhere. The reason, however, why Herod had the Essenes in such honour, and thought more highly of them than of mortal nature, is worthy of record. For this account, too, is not unsuitable for this history, inasmuch as it shows the people's opinion about the Essenes.

"§ 5. There was a certain Essene, named Menahem (Μενάνημος

<sup>48</sup> It is evident that Josephus, as an orthodox and pious Jew, cannot mean by εἰμαρμένη the *Fatum* of the Stoics, which was above the deities; but intends to convey thereby the idea of *eternal counsels* and *predestination* spoken of in the Bible. Indeed, elsewhere Josephus tells us distinctly that "the doctrine of the Essenes delights to leave all things to God" (*vide infra* p. 52); so that that which is in the one case ascribed to *fate*, is in the other ascribed to *God*.

<sup>49</sup> No more regard is to be paid to this remark, that the Essenes are like the Pythagoreans, than to the assertion which Josephus makes afterwards that they are related in their manner of life to the Polistae, (*vide infra* p. 53), as his aim was to shew how much the Jewish sects resembled the Greek systems of philosophy. Comp. p. 41, note 21.

= מנחם) who was celebrated not only for the uprightness of his conduct, but also for the fore-knowledge of the future proceeding from God. When he once saw Herod, as a boy going to school, he addressed him by the name of 'King of the Jews.'<sup>50</sup> Herod thought that he did not know him or that he jested, and reminded him that he was of common origin. But Menahem smiled on him most friendlily, clapped him on the back with his hand, and said—'Thou wilt, nevertheless, be king, and wilt begin thy reign happily, for God has found thee worthy of it. And remember the blows that Menahem has given thee, as being the symbol of the change of thy fortune. For this assurance will be salutary for thee when thou wilt love justice and piety towards God and equity towards thy citizens. However, I know that thou wilt not be such a one, for I can perceive it all. Thou wilt, indeed, excel more than any one in happiness, and obtain an everlasting reputation, but thou wilt forget piety and justice. This will not be concealed from God, for he will visit thee with his wrath for it, towards the end of thy life.' Herod paid very little attention to it at that time, as he had no hope of it. But as he soon afterwards advanced to the dignity of king and was happy, he ordered Menahem to come to him in the height of his dominion, and asked him how long he should reign; but Menahem did not tell him. Seeing that he was silent, he asked again whether he should reign ten years. Whereupon he replied, 'Yes; twenty, nay, thirty years;' but did not determine the exact limit of his reign. Herod, rejoicing on it, gave Menahem his hand and dismissed him, and from that time continued to honour the Essenes. I thought of relating this to the readers (though to some it may seem incredible), and of making

<sup>50</sup> The fact that Menahem saw Herod in Jerusalem, and that the Essene Judah, as Josephus tells us elsewhere (*comp. Jewish War*, book i. chap. iii. § 5; *Antiq.* book xiii. chap. xi. § 2), foretold in the temple the death of Antigones, clearly shows that the Essenes did not at first form a separate community, but lived together with the rest of their Jewish brethren.

it known, as it concerns us, because many of the Essenes are highly esteemed for their virtuous conduct and knowledge of Divine things."

Josephus also relates instances in which Essenes foretold future events, in *Antiq.*, book xviii., chap. ii., § 2 ; book xviii., chap. xiii. § 3 ; and *Jewish War*, book 1, chap. iii., § 5.

The last account which Josephus gives us is to be found in his *Antiq.*, book xviii., chap. i., § 2 and 5.

"§ 2. There have been three philosophies among the Jews ever since the ancient time of the fathers (*ἐκ τοῦ πάνναρχαίου τῶν πατρῶν*), that of the Essenes, and that of the Sadducees, and a third which the so-called Pharisees followed. Although I have already spoken of them in the second book of the *Jewish War*, yet will I mention here also something about them.

"§ 5. The doctrine of the Essenes delights in leaving all to God (*Θεῷ καταλείπειν φιλεῖ τὰ πάντα*). They regard the soul as immortal, and say that the attainment to virtue must be fought for with all our might. Although they send consecrated gifts to the Temple, yet they never bring any sacrifice on account of the different rules of purity which they observe ; hence, being excluded from the common sanctuary, they offer sacrifices in themselves (spiritually). Otherwise, they are in their manner of life the best of men, and employ themselves wholly in the labour of agriculture. Their uprightness is to be admired above all others who endeavour to practice virtue ; such uprightness, which is by no means to be found among the Greeks and foreigners, is not of recent date, but has existed among them from times of yore (*ἐκ παλαιού*), striving most scrupulously not to disturb the community of goods, and that the rich should not enjoy more of the common property than the poor. This is the conduct of this people who are more than four thousand in number. They never marry wives, nor endeavour after the possession of property ;

for they believe that the latter leads to injustice, and the former yields opportunities for domestic discord. Living by themselves they serve each other. They choose good men, who are also priests, to be the stewards of their incomes and the produce of the fields, as well as to procure the corn and food. They do not differ at all in their living, but are more like those whom the Dacae call Polistae."

We notice next the account of Caius Julius Solinus, the author of the Geographical compendium called *Polyhistor*, who flourished about 238 A.D. His accounts, which are to be found in chap. xxxv. § 7-10 of his work, are evidently derived from Pliny.

"In the interior of Judea, towards the west, are the Essenes, who differ from the usages of all other nations in their marvellous constitutions, and who, according to my opinion, have been appointed by divine providence for this mode of life. No woman is to be found there; connubial pleasures they have entirely renounced; money they know not, and palm-berries are their food.<sup>51</sup> Not a single birth takes place there, and yet there is no want of population. The place itself is devoted to modesty. Although a very large number of persons run to it from all quarters, yet none is admitted who is not thought to possess purity, fidelity and innocence; for, if one has been guilty of the slightest misdemeanour, though he endeavour to obtain admission by offering never so large a fortune, he is excluded by a divine decree. Thus it is that through an immense space of ages (*per immensum spatium saeculorum*), incredible to relate,<sup>52</sup> this society is perpetuated though no child is born among them."

51 Pliny, whom Solinus copies, simply says that the Essenes live in the society of palm-trees (*socia palmarum*), to form an antithesis with the appellation a solitary community (*sola gens*); and this is perfectly correct. But Solinus' alteration of it into "palm-berries are their food" (*palms victitant*) is incorrect, inasmuch as they lived from the cultivation of the land, bees, &c.

52 This is simply a reiteration of what Pliny says about the antiquity of the Essenes.

The next account is that of Porphyry, the neo-Platonic philosopher and celebrated antagonist of Christianity, who was born 233 A.D. and died about 306 A.D. His description of the Essenes, which is given in his treatise *On the Abstinence from Animal Food* (*Lugduni ap. Morillon, 1620, p. 381, &c.*), is, as he himself tells us, taken from Josephus. He has, however, made some alterations, as may be seen from the following :

“ There were three sorts of philosophers among the Jews, the first were headed by the Pharisees, the second by the Sadducees, and the third, who seemed the most honourable (*σεμνοτάτη*), by the Essenes. The latter formed such a society as Josephus has described it in different parts of his works, as well as in the second book of the Jewish History, which he composed in seven books, as in the eighteenth book of his Antiquities, which he composed in twenty books, and in the second part to the Greeks.<sup>53</sup>

“ The Essenes are Jews by birth, and love one another more than other people. They avoid sensual enjoyments as vices, and regard continence and the power to resist the passions as the first virtue ; they despise marriage and adopt the children of strangers, whilst still young and suitable for instruction, regard them as their own, and train them in their usages. They do not repudiate matrimony and child birth in themselves, but they guard against the sensuality of women. They despise riches, and there is a wonderful community of goods among them. There is no one found among them who occupies a distinguished position through his wealth ; for they have a law that those who enter the society give up their possessions to the brotherhood, so that there is no such thing among them as abjectness of poverty or arrogance of riches ; but the possessions of all put together form a fraternal and common property. If one of them happens to be inadver-

53 This work of Josephus, addressed to the Greeks, is no longer extant.

tently anointed, he immediately washes his whole body; for they regard it as praiseworthy to have a dry skin, and they are always dressed in white. They appoint stewards to manage their common property; and every one, without distinction, is eligible for all the offices.

"They are not confined to one city, but live in different places, and everything they have is at the service of the members who happen to come from another city. Though meeting for the first time they at once salute each other as intimate friends (*ἴσασιν ὡς περ συνήθεις*); hence they travel without taking anything with them. They do not change either garments or sandals till they are torn or worn out by age; they neither buy nor sell, but every one gives of that which he has to him that wants it, and receives that which he needs; but even without receiving anything in return they freely communicate to him that wants. Their piety towards God is extraordinary. None of them speak about anything profane before the sun rises; but they offer to it some of the prayers transmitted to them by their forefathers, as if they supplicated it to rise, &c., &c." He repeats almost literally the whole of § 5 of Josephus *On the Jewish War*, book ii. chap. viii., which we have given above, p. 43.

Porphyry omits § 6 of Josephus, but gives, with a few verbal alterations, both the whole of § 7, which describes the admission into the order, and § 8, which describes the punishment. He omits the greater part of § 9, and adds the following statement, which is not to be found in Josephus. "Their food is so poor and scanty that they do not require to ease nature on the Sabbath,<sup>54</sup> which they devote to singing praises to God and to rest." He omits from § 10 the description of the division of the Essenes into four classes, and

<sup>54</sup> This is simply imaginary; the real reason for it was, that they could not dig on the Sabbath the hole that was requisite for it without, as they thought, violating the sanctity of the day, as to do so was considered a labour.

simply mentions firmness in suffering and death. He also omits from § 11 the whole piece beginning with the words "In harmony with the opinion of the Greeks, &c.;" whilst he not only gives the whole of § 12, but has also the following addition, "With such a manner of life, and with their firm adhesion to truthfulness and piety, there are naturally many among them who can foretel future events, &c.;" and concludes with the words, "This is the nature of the order of the Essenes among the Jews," omitting altogether what Josephus says in § 13 about those Essenes who marry.

Epiphanius, bishop of Constantia and metropolitan of Cyprus, who was born in Bezanduca, a small town of Palestine, in the first part of the fourth century, and died in 403, has also given us some brief notices of the Essenes in his celebrated work *Against the Heretics*. His first notice is to be found in *Adver. Haer.*, lib. i. ord. x. p. 28, ed. Col., 1682, under the title *Against the Essenes and the Samaritans*, and is as follows :

"The Essenes continue in their first position, and have not altered at all. According to them there have been some dissensions among the Gorthenes, in consequence of some difference of opinion which has taken place among them—I mean among the Sebuens, Essenes and Gorthenes. The difference of opinion relates to the following matter. The law of Moses commands the Israelites of all places to come up to Jerusalem to the three festivals, viz., the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. As the Jews in Judea and Samaria were largely dispersed, it is supposed that those of them who made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem went through Samaritan cities, and as the Samaritans assemble at the same time to celebrate the festivals, a conflict arose between them."

Epiphanius speaks of them again (*Adv. Haer.*, lib. i. ord. xix. p. 39), and under the title, *Against the Ossenes* (*κατὰ Ὀσσινῶν*), as follows :

"Next follow the Ossenes, who were closely connected with the former sect. They too are Jews, hypocrites in their demeanour, and peculiar people in their conceits.<sup>55</sup> They originated, according to the tradition which I received, in the regions of Nabatea, Itruria, Moabitis and Antilis, ('Αρηιλίτις), in the surrounding neighbourhood of the so-called Dead Sea.

. . . The name Ossenes, according to its etymology, signifies *the stout race* (σφιγνὸν γένος). . . . A certain person named Elxai joined them at the time of the Emperor Trajan, after the advent of the Saviour, who was a false prophet. He wrote a so-called prophetical book, which he pretended to be according to divine wisdom. He had a brother named Jeeus, who also misled people in their manner of life, and caused them to err with his doctrine. A Jew by birth, and professing the Jewish doctrines, he did not live according to the Mosaic law, but introduced quite different things, and misled his own sect. . . . He joined the sect of the Ossenes, of which some remnants are still to be found in the same regions of Nabatea and Perea towards Moabitis. These people are now called *Simseans*."<sup>56</sup>

"But hear the Sadducee's nonsense (*comp. ibid.*, p. 42) : he rejects the sacrificial and altar services, as repulsive to the Deity, and as things which, according to the meaning of the fathers and the Mosaic law, were never offered to the Lord in a worthy manner. Yet he says that we must pray with our faces to Jerusalem, where the sacrificial altar and the sacrifices have their place. He rejects the eating of animal flesh which is common among the Jews, and other things ; nay, even the sacrificial altar and the sacrificial fire, as being foreign to the

<sup>55</sup> This unjust remark about the Essenes, whose exemplary virtues and self-denying life elicited the unqualified admiration of Jews, Greeks, and Romans, is just what might be expected from the bigoted persecutor of heretics, amongst whom he put no less a person than St. Chrysostom.

<sup>56</sup> This name may be derived from the Hebrew *Shemesh* (שמש) *sun*, and was most probably given to the Essenes, because of the erroneous notion that they worshipped the sun.



Deity. The purifying water, he says, is worthy of God, but the fire is unworthy, because of the declaration of the prophet: 'Children, go ye not there to see the fire of the sacrifices, for ye err; yea, it is already an error to think such a thing.' 'If you look at the fire very closely,' says he, 'it is still far off. Moreover, go ye not to look at the sacrificial fire, but go ye rather to the doctrine of the water..' There is much more of such idle talk to be found among the Ossenes."<sup>57</sup>

These are the sources from which writers upon the Essenes have, till within very lately, drawn their information. As to the account of Eusebius (*comp. Hist. Ecclesiast., lib. ii, cap. xvii*), to which appeal is often made, it is nothing but a Christianized reproduction of the so-called Philonic description of the Therapeutae. It would therefore be useless to give it. In looking through these accounts, it will be seen that there are only three independent ones among them, namely—Philo's, Josephus's and Pliny's; as the notice of Solinus is merely a repetition of Pliny, the description of Porphyry is almost a literal reproduction of Josephus; whilst the distorted scraps of Epiphanius are not only worse than useless, but are unworthy of him, and the account of Eusebius is simply misleading, inasmuch as it is a repetition of an apocryphal story, which has nothing to do with the Essenes.

<sup>57</sup> The whole of this account is worse than useless, inasmuch as it not only gives us no information whatever about this interesting order, but is positively misleading.

### III.

Having given the ancient documents, all that now remains is that I should give a brief sketch of the most important modern literature on the Essenes. In doing this part of my task, as in the former, I shall try as much as it is possible to follow the chronological order.

1513-1577.—Accordingly De Rossi occupies the first position. In his erudite work, called *Meor Enajim*, i.e., *The Light of the Eyes*, which is a Cyclopædia of Biblical literature and criticism, this profound critic gives us a brief notice of this brotherhood, in which he maintains that the Essenes are identical with the Greek sect called *Baithusians* in the Talmud, and *Therapeutae* by Philo. His account is as follows : “ It has often appeared to me strange that the Talmud should say nothing whatever about that sect which obtained a good report among the nations. I therefore examined the works of our sages, to ascertain whether I could find in them any distinction made between the Sadducees and the Baithusians. And it appeared to me that though both alike denied the traditional law (התורה שעל פה), yet the Baithusians are no where charged with the sin of denying, like the Sadducees, the immortality of the soul and future judgment. Moreover, I thought of the similarity of the names Baithusians and Essenes (ביתוסים איסיאי), and especially of the manner in which the ancients changed names. Now, owing to the word בית being so frequently found prefixed to names of schools and families, the appellation ביתוסים might easily have originated from a junction of the words בית איסיאי. I also saw the passage in the Talmud, Sabbath, cap. viii, fol. 108, as quoted also in Sopherim, cap. i, which is as follows :—‘ A Baithusian

asked R. Joshua whence do we know that phylacteries must not be written upon the skin of an unclean animal? To which he replied—'It is written that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth, (Exod. xiii, 9) this signifies that phylacteries must be written upon the skin of an animal which thou canst take into thy mouth, i.e., eat.' To this he said—'This being the case, we must also not write the phylacteries upon the skin of an animal which died;' [for an Israelite is as much forbidden to taste the flesh of it, as to eat an unclean animal.] Hereupon the Rabbi replied—'I will tell thee a parable, to make the thing clear. Two men are condemned to death: the one the king kills, and the other is killed by the executioner: now, which of the two dost thou esteem higher? Surely the one whom the king himself has executed. So the animal which died, [i.e., which the King of Kings caused to die] must be preferred to the others.' Whereupon the Baithusian said—'Accordingly, we ought also to eat it.' R. Joshua replied—'The Bible prohibits it (Dent. xiv), and dost thou want to eat it?' The Baithusian then said—'קלוס This expression Rashi of blessed memory rightly says is Greek; i.e. *καλόν*.' Hence it is to be inferred that the Baithusian was a Greek; and, indeed, we know from Philo and Josephus that the Essenes were also Greek Jews, living in Alexandria.

. . . From all these things I easily quieted my mind, and concluded that the Baithusians are the same as the Essenes.' Now, from a careful perusal of the account given by Josephus of the Essenes, it will be seen that he never describes them as Greek Jews. Besides, this is utterly at variance with ancient tradition, as the Talmudic authorities most positively declare that the Baithusians and Sadducees were both alike in doctrine, that both derived their names from the founder of these sects, Baithos (ביתוס) and Zadok (צדיק), the disciples of Antigonus of Soho, and that they gave rise to these sects, through mis-

interpreting the following saying of their master<sup>2</sup> which he had received from Simon the Just :—“ Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward, but be ye like servants who serve their master without the view of receiving a reward,” recorded in Aboth. i. 3. Upon this Aboth d. R. Nathan (cap. v.) remarks, “Antigonus’ two disciples at first continued implicitly to teach this saying to their disciples, and these again to their disciples. At last, however, they began to ponder over it, and said—‘What did our fathers mean by this saying? Is a labourer to labour all day and not receive his wages in the evening? Now if our fathers had believed that there is another world, and a resurrection of the dead, they would not have spoken thus.’ Hence they dissented from the law, and from them originated the two sects, the Sadducees and the Baithusians, the Sadducees from Sadok and the Baithusians from Baithus. They used gold and silver vessels all the days of their life, not because they were proud, but because they said that the Pharisees themselves have a tradition that they afflict themselves in this world, and have nothing in the world to come.” From this we see that 1. The Baithusians, like the Sadducees, derived their appellation from the proper name of their founder, which is *Baithus* בַּיתוֹס so that the first part of the name בַּית cannot be separated from it. 2. Like the Sadducees, the Baithusians denied the immortality of the soul and the existence of angels, whereas the Essenes firmly believed in the immortality of the soul, and made the angels play a very important part in their creed. That the Sadducees and the Baithusians were considered to be identical, or, at all events, to

\* אנטיגנוס איש סוכו קבל משמעון הצדיק הוא היה אמר אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב על סנה לקבל שום אלא היו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב שלא על סנה לקבל שום והיו מורא שמים עליהם כד שיהיה שבתם כפול לצד לבא: אנטיגנוס איש סוכו היו לו שני תלמידים שהיו שונים בדבריו שונים היו לתלמידים ותלמידים לתלמידיהם עמדו דקדקו אחריהן ואמרו מה ראו אבותינו לומר כאשר שיצשה סוף מלאכה כל היום ולא יכול שבו ערביה אלא אילו ידעין אבותינו שיש העולם 'אחר' ויש ההיה המדום לא היו אומרים כך עמדו וצוהו כי התורה ונצטו מהם שתי פרצות צדוקים וביחוסין צדוקים על שום צדוק ביחוסין על שום ביהוס שהיה משחמש בבלי והב וכלי כסף כל ימיו לא היתה דעתו נטה עליו אלא צדוקים אומרים מסורה בית פרושים שהן מצטרין עצמן בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא אין להם כלום:

hold similar doctrines is also evident from the fact that what is in one place of the Talmud ascribed to the former, is in another place ascribed to the latter. Thus, for instance, in *Succa* 48 *b.* the Sadducees are said to have questioned the necessity of bringing a libation of water on the Feast of Tabernacles; in *Tosifta Succa* cap. iii. it is ascribed to the Baithusians. In *Maccoth*, 5, *b.* *Chagiga*, 16 *b.* it is said that the Sadducees urged that a false witness should only then be executed if the individual whom he had falsely accused had already been executed; in *Tosifta Sanhedrin*, cap. vi. the same thing is ascribed to the Baithusians. According to *Joma*, 19 *b.* 53 *a.*, the Sadducees would have it that the High Priest should put the incense on the fire outside the Sanctuary on the great Day of Atonement, in *Tosifta Joma*, cap. 1, and *Jerusalem Joma*, i. 5, this is also ascribed to the Baithusians. *Comp.* also 115, *b.*, *Megillath Taanith*, cap. vi., with *Tosifta Jadajim* cap. ii. And 4. The Baithusians are constantly spoken of as heretics and false witnesses (*comp. Jerusalem Rosh Ha-Shana*, ii, 1; *Babl. ibid.* 226), which is utterly at variance with the high character given to the Essenes even by those who belonged to opposite sects.

1587-1648.—Our learned countryman, Dr. Thomas Godwyn occupies the next position. In his interesting and erudite volume, entitled *Moses and Aaron*: which was first published in London 1625, Godwyn devotes *the twelfth chapter of the first book* to the Essenes. The etymology of this name he takes to be the Syriac *NDN to heal, to cure diseases*, and submits that they were called *ESSENE* = *ἰατροὶ* *physicians*, because they cultivated the study of medicine. His summary of their doctrines and practices is made from Josephus' description of them as well as from Philo's reputed account of *the Therapeutae* which has nothing to do with the Palestinian Essenes. Godwyn also gives a number of supposed parallels between the doctrines and practices of

Essenism and Pythagorism. He does not attempt to account for these resemblances, nor does he try to trace the origin of the brotherhood. He is, however, certain that they existed in the time of Judas Maccabæus and "continued until the day of our Saviour and after; for Philo and Josephus speak of them as living in their time." He assigns the following reasons for their not being mentioned in the New Testament. 1. Their being small in number. 2. "They were peaceable and quiet, not opposing any; and therefore not so liable to reproof as the Pharisees and Sadducees, who opposed each other, and both joined against Christ." 3. They were passed over in silence in the New Testament just "as the Rechabites in the Old Testament, of whom there is mention only once and that obliquely, although their order continued about three hundred years, before this testimony was given of them by the Prophet Jeremiah." And 4. "Though the name of the *Essenes* be not found in Scripture, yet we shall find in St. Paul's Epistles many things reproved, which were taught in the school of the Essenes. Of this nature was that advice given unto Timothy:—'*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine.*' (1 Tim. v. 23). Again, '*Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats is a doctrine of devils*' (1 Tim. iv. 3); but especially *Colossians* ii., in many passages the Apostle seemeth directly to point at them, 'Let no man condemn you in meat and drink' (verse 16): 'Let no man bear rule over you, by humbleness of mind and worshipping of angels' (verse 18) 'Why are ye subject to ordinances (*τι δογματίζεσθε* verse 20)?' The Apostle useth the word *δόγματα* which was applied by the Essenes to denote their *ordinances aphorisms* or *constitutions*. In the verse following he gives an instance of some particulars, '*Touch not, taste not, handle not*' (ver. 21). Now the junior company of Essenes might not *touch* the seniors. And in their diet their taste was limited to bread, salt, water

and hyssop. And these ordinances they undertook *διὰ πόθον σοφίας* saith Philo, *for the love of wisdom*; but the Apostle concludeth (ver. 23) that these things had only *λόγον σοφίας* a show of *wisdom*. And whereas Philo termeth the religion of the Essenes by the name of *θεράπεια* which word signifieth *religious worship*; the Apostle termeth in the same verse *εθελθερεσίαν* *voluntary religious worship* or *will worship*; yea, where he termeth their doctrine *πάτρων φιλοσοφίας* a kind of *philosophy received* from their forefathers by tradition; St. Paul biddeth them beware of *philosophy* (ver. 8).<sup>3</sup> I have given this extract in full because succeeding writers have with more or less exactness based their opinion upon it. In animadverting upon it, I need only refer to the former part of this Essay, where it will be seen that some of the things here mentioned, are not peculiar to the Essenes, and others do not belong to them at all, whilst the last quotation from Philo describes the *Therapeutae* and not the Essenes.<sup>3</sup>

1628-1678.—Next in point of time is Theophilus Gale, who gives us a description of the Essenes in his famous work called *The Court of the Gentiles*, part ii. (Oxford, 1671), book ii. § 9, p. 146-156. As might be expected from this learned writer, who wrote this elaborate work to demonstrate that “the original of all human literature, both philology and philosophy, is from the Scriptures and the Jewish Church,” he endeavours to prove that Pythagoras took the whole of his philosophic system from the Essenes. “As for the origination of their name,” Gale tells us, “they were called *ΕΣΣΗΝ* i.e. according to the Greek *καθαροί* and according to our English dialect *pure*. Now the origination or rise of these Essenes I conceive (by the best conjectures I can make from antiquity), to be in or immediately after the Babylonian captivity (though some make them later), and the occasion of their separation

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Moses and Aaron: Civil and Ecclesiastical Rites used by the Ancient Hebrews, eighth edition (London, 1672), book i, chap. xii, p. 50-59.

and consociation seems this. Many of the carnal Jews defiling themselves either by being too deeply plunged in worldly affairs, even to the neglect of their religion, or, which was worse, by sensual compliances with their idolatrous lords, thereby to secure their carnal interests, these **חסידים** or Essenes, to preserve themselves from these common pollutions, separated and retired themselves from the crowd of worldly affairs into an holy solitude, and private condition of life ; where they entered into a strict confederation or consociation to lead together a collegiate devout life."<sup>4</sup> He then gives an epitome of their doctrines and practices, and finally endeavours to shews that Pythagoras got his system from them. In doing this, Gale mixes up the Therapeutae with the Essenes, and follows largely the description of Godwyn.

1643-1724.—We then come to Dean Prideaux, who has a lengthy description of the Essenes in *The Old and New Testaments Connected*, part ii. book v., which first appeared in London, 1717. The chief value of Prideaux's work on this subject consists in the fact, that he has given in English Philo and Josephus on the Essenes, as well as the short notice from Pliny. In his own remarks, which follow these extracts, he, in common with his predecessors, mixes up the Therapeutae with the Essenes, and tries to repel the Romanists who adopted the assertion of Eusebius (*Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. ii. c. 17*), that these Therapeutae or contemplative Essenes were Christian monks instituted by St. Mark. He also endeavours to expose the folly of the Deists, who infer, from the agreement between the Christian religion and the documents of the Essenes, that Christ and his followers were no other than a sect branched out from that of the Essenes. Among the accusations which the Dean brings against the Essenes for violating the law of God, is the charge that they "absolutely condemned servitude which the holy Scriptures of the

<sup>4</sup> The Court of the Gentiles. Pt. ii of "Philosophy," Oxford, 1671, p. 147, &c.



New Testament (Philemon 9-21), as well as the Old, allow."<sup>5</sup> Instead of blaming them for repudiating slavery, we believe that the civilized world in the present day will be unanimous in pronouncing it to have been one of the glorious features of Essenism, anticipating the spirit of Christianity and the philanthropy of the nineteenth century.

1653-1723.—Basnage gives a very lengthy account of the Essenes in his *History of the Jews lib. ii. chaps. xii. xiii.* Those who are acquainted with the writings of this learned Frenchman, know that he could not write on anything without bringing together a mass of useful information. He, however, mistook the character of the Essenes, as well as the value of the documents upon which he relies. Preferring Philo's account to that of Josephus, though the latter lived amongst the Essenes, Basnage confounds the brotherhood with the Therapeutae, and hence asserts that "they borrowed several superstitions from the Egyptians, among whom they retired." Through this, he is led to occupy by far the greater part of his description with the needless discussion of the question "Whether the Essenes from being Jews were converted to Christianity by St. Mark, and founded a monastic life."<sup>6</sup>

1692-1762.—Dr. Jennings' chapter on the Essenes is simply a commentary on Godwyn's account. Jennings disputes some of the imaginary parallels between Essenism and Pythagorism exhibited by Godwyn, and inclines to the opinion "that the Essenes begun a little before the time of the Maccabees, when the faithful Jews were forced to fly from the cruel persecutions of their enemies into deserts and caves, and by living in those retreats, many of them being habituated to retirement, which thereby became most agreeable to them, they chose to continue it, even when they might have appeared upon the public

<sup>5</sup> The Old and New Testaments Connected, seventeenth editions, vol. iii. London, 1815, part ii, book v, p. 406—431.

<sup>6</sup> The History of the Jews, from Jesus Christ to the present day. London, 1708, p. 125—137.

stage again, and accordingly formed themselves into recluses." As to the difficulty to account for "the absolute silence of the evangelical history concerning the Essenes," Jennings reiterates the remarks of Godwyn upon the subject.<sup>7</sup>

In 1821, appeared in Berlin, Bellermann's valuable little volume on the Essenes and Therapeutae.<sup>8</sup> The author with characteristic German industry and perseverance, brought together in this monograph the ancient documents on the Essenes. His critical acumen, however, is not commensurate to his industry, and while his little volume will deservedly continue to be a useful manual for the student who wishes to acquaint himself with what Philo, Pliny, Josephus, Solinus, Porphyry, Epiphanius and Eusebius said upon this subject, it is to be questioned whether Bellermann's conclusions will be shared by many. He is of opinion that "the Essenes and Baithusians are the same both in name and doctrine," and that "the Essenes have four other names in history besides their proper name, viz. :—they are called, 1, *Therapeutae* by the Greek Alexandrians. 2. *Hiketeans* by Philo, in the superscription to the Treatise on contemplative life. 3. *Ossenes* or *Ossens*, by Epiphanius. And 4, *Baithusians* in the Talmud, and by several Rabbins. As this notion, which has been advanced by De Rossi three centuries and a half ago, has already been refuted, it would be needless to repeat the arguments here.

1825.—Neander, whose first instalment of his gigantic Church History appeared in 1825, now began to grapple with this mysterious brotherhood. In the introductory chapter of this history, in which a description is given of the religious condition of the world at the advent of Christ, he gives a very

<sup>7</sup> Jewish Antiquities; or a Course of Lectures on the two first books of Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, ninth edition. London, 1837, book i., chap. xii, p. 281—287.

<sup>8</sup> Geschichtliche Nachrichten aus dem Alterthume über Essäer und Therapeuten. Berlin, 1821.

brief but very pregnant sketch of the Essenes. With that deep penetration, which was one of the chief characteristics of this sagacious critic, he repudiates the notion that the Essenes originated under foreign influences, and maintains that "it is a gross error to infer from the resemblance of certain religious phenomena the relationship of which is to be traced to a common inward cause, inherent in the nature of the human mind, that they have an external origin, having been copied from the other." Hence, he submits that Essenism arose out of the deeper religious meaning of the Old Testament, that it afterwards adopted some of the old Oriental, Parsee, and Chaldean notions, and that it had no Alexandrian elements. Neander moreover most justly cautions against the accounts of Philo and Josephus, saying that they clothed the opinions of the Essenes in a garb peculiarly Grecian, which we might rightly consider as not originally belonging to them.<sup>9</sup>

1829.—The difficulty which perplexed Christian writers, arising from the fact that the Essenes are not mentioned in the New Testament, did not affect Jewish writers, although it is true that this name is also not to be found in the ancient Jewish writings. For if it be granted that this appellation is a corruption of an Aramaic word, the Essenes must be looked for in the Talmud and Midrashim, which are chiefly written in Aramaic, under their original designation whatever that might be. The clue to it must, of course, be the identity of the features ascribed to them by Philo and Josephus and those ascribed in the ancient Jewish volumes to any order of Judaism. To this task Rappaport, the corypheus of Jewish critics, betook himself. Knowing that the Essenes were no distinct sect, in the strict sense of the word, but simply an order of Judaism, and that there never was a rupture between them and the rest of the Jewish community, Rappaport most

<sup>9</sup> General History of the Christian Religion and Church, English Translation, Clark's Theological Library, vol. i, Edinburgh, 1851, p. 58—66.

justly does not expect that they would be spoken of under a fixed denominational name. He therefore rejects De Rossi's notion that the Baithusians, so frequently denounced in the Talmud and Midrashim, are the Essenes described by Philo and Josephus, and sought to identify them by their peculiar practices, expecting to find that they would be spoken of by different names. He soon found that what Philo and Josephus describe as peculiarities of the Essenes tallies with what the Mishna, the Talmud, and the Midrashim record of the *Chassidim* (חסידים), and that they are most probably the so-called *old believers* (ותיקין), who are also described in the Talmud as *the holy community in Jerusalem* (קהל קדוש דבירושלים). He rightly recognised in them an intensified form of Pharisaism, and remarks that what is said in the Mishna about the moderation observed in eating and drinking, the great humility, endurance under sufferings, zeal for everything that is holy, community of goods, &c., refers to this holy community, or the Essenes. He also quotes the following remark from the Midrash Coheleth, on Eccles. ix, 9, about this holy community; "Rabi repeated from the traditions of the holy community (עדה קדושה) 'acquire a trade in connection with the study of the Scriptures, &c.'—[Query] 'Why are they called holy community?' [Reply] 'Because they divided the day into three divisions—devoting one-third to the study of the Scriptures, another to prayer, and the third to work. Some say that they devoted the whole of the winter to studying the Scriptures and the summer to work.'" He, too, was the first who pointed out that the prayer which Josephus tells us the Essenes offered up at the rising of the sun, is the national hymn of praise, which still constitutes a part of the Jewish daily service, and is as follows:—

He in mercy causes His light to shine upon the earth and upon the inhabitants thereof; and in His goodness unfaillingly renews every day the work of creation. How numerous are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made them all in wisdom; the earth is full of Thy possessions.

O King, Thou only art the exalted one from everlasting, the praised and glorified and extolled since the days of yore! Lord of the universe, in Thy great mercy have mercy upon us! Lord our might, fortress of our strength, shield of our salvation, defend us! O Lord, be Thou praised, Thou great in wisdom, who hast ordained and created the rays of the sun: the Infinitely Good has formed a glorious testimony for His name. He surrounded His majesty with luminaries. The chiefs of His heavenly hosts are holy beings; they glorify the Almighty; they continually declare the glory of God and his holiness. Blessed be the Lord our God, for the excellency of the works of Thy hands, and for the shining luminaries which Thou hast. They shall glorify Thee for ever.

God, the Lord of all created things, is praised and blessed in the mouths of all the living. His power and goodness fill the universe; wisdom and intelligence are round about Him. He exalts himself above the angels, and beams in glory upon his chariot-throne. Interceding goodness and rectitude are before His throne, loving-kindness and mercy before his majesty. Benign are the luminaries which our God has created. He has formed them in wisdom, intelligence, and understanding; He has endowed them with power and strength to bear rule in the midst of the world. Filled with splendour and brightness, their glory illuminates all the world; rejoicing in rising and joyous in setting they perform with awe the will of their Creator. They give praise and glory to His name, joy and song to the memory of His kingdom. He called the sun, and light rose; He saw and shaped the form of the moon. Praise Him all ye heavenly hosts; ascribe glory and majesty to Him ye seraphim, ophanim, and holy angels.

These, as Rappaport rightly remarks, are some of the remains of the ancient prayer used by the Essenes. It will be seen that these hymns of praise contain not only thanksgiving for the renewal of the light, to which Josephus refers, but they also refer to the mysterious cosmogony (מעשה בראשית) and theosophy (מעשה מרכבה), as well as to the angels which played such an important part among this brotherhood.<sup>10</sup>

1835.—The difficulty of reading Rabbinical Hebrew in which Rappaport's profound remarks are written, must have prevented Gfrörer from seeing what this erudite Jewish critic had written on the Essenes; for, although the second edition of vol. i. part 11 of his *Critical History of Primitive Christianity*, containing an account of the Essenes, appeared in 1835, yet he positively states "that the Essenes and the Therapeutae are the same sect and hold the same views" (p.299).

<sup>10</sup> Rappaport, in the Hebrew Annual, entitled *Bikure Ha-Ittim*, vol. x. Vienna, 1829, p. 118 ff.

According to him, the development of Essenism is as follows. In the third century before Christ, the Jews in Alexandria formed societies according to the Pythagorean model, and thus originated the sect called the Therapeutae, from these Egyptian Therapeutae again Essenism developed itself in Palestine about 130 B.C. Hence Essenism is the channel through which the Alexandrian theosophy was first transplanted into Palestinian soil. The reason why the Essenes kept their doctrines secret is that the Palestinian priests were hostile to this foreign importation, and persecuted those who received this contraband. Accordingly, the relationship of Pythagorism, Therapeutism and Essenism, to use Gfrörer's own figure, is that of grandmother, mother and daughter. "So perfect is the agreement between the Therapeutae and the Essenes, that it even extends to their names. For the word 'Essaïus, according to the most correct etymology, is derived from the Syro-Chaldaic verb **NDN** which denotes *to cure, to nurse*, and hence is nothing but a literal translation of *θεραπευτής*,"<sup>11</sup>

1843.—Similar in spirit is the elaborate article on the Essenes in *Ersch und Gruber's Cyclopædia*, written by Dähne, who maintains that "Essenism is the produce of the Jewish-Alexandrian philosophy, and that it is only when viewed from this stand-point that the deviations from the rest of their Jewish co-religionists, and their peculiar institutions, doctrines, and precepts appear in the clearest light." It is not surprising that holding such an opinion Dähne should feel perplexed to account for the existence of this thoroughly Jewish-Alexandrian order, as he makes the Essenes to be, in the very heart of Palestine. All that he can say upon this subject is, that they somehow got there in the middle of the second century before Christ. The affiliation of Essenism to the Jewish-

<sup>11</sup> Comp. *Kritische Geschichte des Urchristenthums*. 1 Theil Philo und die jüdisch-alexandrianische Theosophie, 11 Abtheilung. Stuttgart, 1835. p. 299-356.

Alexandrian philosophy brings it into most intimate relationship with Therapeutism, and necessarily devolves upon Dähne to define this family connection which he does in the following manner.<sup>12</sup> The difference between the Therapeutae and the Essenes, both of whom are followers of the Jewish-Alexandrian moral philosophy, is that the former devoted themselves entirely to a contemplative life, whilst the latter gave themselves more especially to a practical life. Hence though both rest upon the same foundation, the Therapeutae gave themselves up absolutely to the highest aim of man, as they marked it out, the contemplation of God; whilst the Essenes to some extent voluntarily lingered in the outer court of the Holy of Holies, placed themselves intentionally for the good of the brethren in more frequent contact with the world than the requirements of nature demanded, thereby generously, but certainly unphilosophically, temporarily retarding their own highest perfection and happiness." Like De Rossi, Bellermann, Gfrörer and others, Dühne derives the name from the Chaldee **NDN** to heal, and says "accordingly the term Essenes denotes *spiritual physicians*, or men who strive in the highest sense to lead back the spirit to its natural (i.e. truly divine) character and activity."<sup>13</sup>

1846.—A new epoch began in the history of the Essenes with the investigation of Frankel on this subject, which

<sup>12</sup> Diese Trennung nun aber unter den Anhängern der jüdisch-alexandrinischen Religionsphilosophie selbst in solche, welche sich ausschliesslich dem beschaulichen und in Andere, welche sich vorzugsweise dem praktischen Leben widmeten, ist es eben, welche sich in unserem fraglichen Doppelorden auch äusserlich repräsentirte, sodass, wenn schon beide ganz auf derselben philosophischen Unterlage ruhten, die Therapeuten sich möglichst ausschliesslich und unmittelbar dem höchsten von ihnen angestrebten menschlichen Lebensziele, der Anschauung Gottes selbst, hingaben, während die Essäer gewissermassen freiwillig in dem Vorhofe zum Allerheiligsten zögernd, sich absichtlich und zum Besten der Brüder häufiger in Berührung setzten mit dem Sänlichen, als es die Naturnothwendigkeit foderte und so ihre eigene höchste Vollkommenheit und Seligkeit zwar grossmüthig, aber gewiss auch unphilosophisch genug augenblicklich noch verkümmerten.

<sup>13</sup> Comp. Ersch und Gruber's Allgemeine Encyclopädie, section i. vol. xxxviii. p. 173-192.

appeared in his *Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interesse des Judenthums*, 1846. Taking up the idea of Rappaport, that the Essenes must be looked for in the body of the Jews and not as a separate sect, Frankel refers to the fact that, whilst the *Assideans* = *Chassidim* are referred to in 1 Macc. ii. 24; 2 Macc. xiv. 6, &c., the *Perushim* = *Pharisees* are never mentioned, to show that no such marked and denominational divisions existed at first in the community, and rightly remarks, that it "is only after a longer development that sects appear in their separation, and sharply defined features, when that which originally formed a united whole is now divided and parted into various branches. And even this partition and separation only shew themselves to the analysing mind, and especially when the analysis is conducted after a foreign fashion, as Josephus has done it, who reduced the Jewish sects into Greek schools, and made the Essenes correspond to the Pythagoreans. But in reality even these divisions flow one into another, and do not stand in opposition to one another, but are simply to be distinguished by their different shades of colour, and by the greater stringency or laxity with which the same rules are regarded, so that they do not form separate sects, but some individuals keep to these rules with greater anxiety, whilst others, though considering them as binding, do not regard them as having such a wide application. Now in early times there were only *Essenes* = *Chassidim* (חסידים), the name of *Perush* = *Pharisee* (פרוש) was not as yet known; it was only afterwards when in succeeding periods some became more rigid in their manner of life and views of religion, that the name Pharisees (פרושים) appears to denote the less strict Jews, whilst the others were in a special degree denominated by the old, respectable appellation *Chassidim* = *Essenes* (חסידים)." This, Frankel corroborates by showing most clearly that many of the vital principles which Josephus describes as peculiar to Essenism, are at the very basis of



Pharisaism, and that the Essenes are frequently mentioned in the Mishna, Talmud, and Midrashim by the names חסידים הראשונים *the original Assideans* = Chassidim, חברים *the associates*, ותיקין *those who have enfeebled their bodies through much study*; דבירושלים *the retired ones*; צנועין *the holy congregation in Jerusalem*; קהלא קדישא *the hemerobaptists*. Frankel concluded his essay with the promise to return to this subject on some future occasion.<sup>14</sup>

1847.—Within twelve months of the publication of Frankel's elaborate Essay, an article appeared in the American Quarterly entitled *The Biblical Repository*. As there was not sufficient time for this German production to become known in the New World, Mr. Hall, the writer of the article, could not avail himself of it, and was therefore obliged to derive his information from the writings of Dr. Neander. But though Mr. Hall has thrown no light on the Essenes, yet his reflections upon their moral character and their connection with Christianity are so just, sensible and candid, that we subjoin them to show that good Christians may honestly acknowledge the good in Essenism without detracting from Christianity.

"Let us give the Essene credit for all that he was as a worshipper of the true God, and as a man striving after moral purity in a corrupt age. The Gospel that breathed new life into the higher nature of man, can afford to allow all his virtues. We know that the Spirit of Christ opens the eye to the excellencies of others. Truth rejoices in truth, and as all truth is from the same source, the lustre of one development can never be increased by hiding the glory of another. We would not enhance the necessity of our Lord's appearance by depreciating the moral condition of mankind at that period. Those ascetic Jews deserve well of mankind for the light they gave out in a dark age. We admire the humanity and justice of their principles; their disapproval of war and slavery in the midst of a world lying in wickedness, and the noble example of industry, frugality and moderation in the things of this life they set before all. We honour their honest endeavours to combine the *vita contemplativa* and the *vita activa*,—to escape the bondage of the senses, to maintain the supremacy of the spirit, and to unite themselves with the Highest. But in all these respects, they are only the true children of monotheism, the legitimate offspring of the Jewish theocracy. They could have sprung up nowhere else. In the phenomenon of the Essenes let us

<sup>14</sup> Comp. Frankel, Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interessen des Judenthums, vol. iii. Berlin, 1846, p. 441-461.

therefore adore the provident wisdom of Jehovah, and recognize the secret working of his love in carrying forward the great, eternal economy of salvation. They exerted an influence on their age which helped to pave the way for the Christ. Conscience spoke, and was spoken to, through them; and the dying sense of virtue was kept alive. Thus were they stars which emitted an humble though useful light before, but grew pale and became invisible after, the coming of the Sun of Righteousness." <sup>15</sup>

1852.—Though Ewald published the second edition of the fourth volume of his *Jewish History* in 1852, when Frankel's *Essay* had been six years before the literary world, yet he manifests total ignorance of it in his account of the Essenes, contained in this volume. Still, this profound and merciless critic, without having access to the Jewish information gathered from the Talmud and Midrashim, saw that Essenism was no Greek plant transplanted into Palestine, but like Pharisaism grew out of the Chassidim. He remarks that "people, who left the great community in order to lead a specially holy life, with the permission and under the direction of the law, were to be found in Israel from the remotest times, yet in its first form there were only the Nazarites, of whom each one lived for himself; and in the second, the Rechabites combined themselves already into a larger union; but now the whole conscience of the people itself, as it were, departed into solitude with numerous Essenes. For it cannot be denied that they, proceeding from the Chassidim, represent the direct and legitimate development of Judaism in the form which became the ruling one since Ezra." "Their new features and endeavours merely consisted in their intensely earnest and rigorous application of the demands of the law, as understood and interpreted since Ezra. Finding that the rigorous and logical application of these laws was impossible in the great community, especially in that community as regulated by the Pharisees, they preferred to congregate and

<sup>15</sup> Comp. *The Biblical Repository and Classical Review*. New York, 1847, p. 162-173.

live in solitude." <sup>16</sup> Very unfortunate is Ewald's derivation of Essene from the Rabbinic עֲבָד *servant* (of God), and the assertion that this name was given to them because it was their only desire to be *θεραπευταὶ θεοῦ*.

1853.—Nearly seven years had now elapsed since Frankel published his masterly Essay on the Essenes, and promised to return to this subject at some future time. True to his promise, he now gave another elaborate treatise, in which he substantiated, by numerous quotations from the Talmud, his former conclusions, that the Essenes are the offspring of Judaism, that they are nothing but stationary, or more correctly speaking consequential Chassidim, that they were therefore not so far distant from the Pharisees as to be regarded as a separate sect, but, on the contrary, that they formed a branch of Pharisaism. <sup>17</sup>

1856.—So convincing was Frankel's Treatise, that Graetz, who published the third volume of his masterly History of the Jews in 1856, in which he gives an elaborate account of this brotherhood, remarks: <sup>18</sup> "I completely accept these results about this sect being based upon critical investigation, and shall only add a few supplementary points by way of illustration." <sup>19</sup> The additions consist of a very able analysis of Philo's reputed Treatise entitled *De Vita Contemplativa*, showing that it is spurious, and of an attempt to show that the Essenes were *perpetual Nazarites* (נְזִירֵי עוֹלָם). His remarks are as follow—"There were great masses of Nazarites in the

<sup>16</sup> Geschichte des Volkes Israel, Vierter Band. Göttingen, 1852, p. 419-428.

<sup>17</sup> Comp. Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums, Zweiter Jahrgang. Leipzig, 1853, p. 30-40; 61-73.

<sup>18</sup> Ich nehme diese auf kritischer Forschung, beruhenden Resultate über diese Secte vollständig an und werde nur noch einige Punkte nachträglich beleuchten.

<sup>19</sup> Die Eigenthümlichkeiten der Essäer lassen sich nicht genügend aus dem Wesen der im Talmud vorkommenden עֲבָדִים oder עֲבָדֵי הַמִּצְוָה und der in der Makkabäerzeit auftretenden „Assidäer“ erklären; man muss auch auf das nasiräische Wesen Rücksicht nehmen. Nasiräer gab es in der nachexilischen Zeit eine grosse Menge (*Tosifia Nasir* c. iv. *Babli Berachot* 48 a. 1 *Makkub.* ii, 49. *Jos. Alterth.* xviii, 6, 1). Aber sie trugen zugleich einen andern Charakter, als

post-exile period (*Tosifta Nasir*, c. iv.; *Babbi Berachoth*, 48 a.; 1 *Macc.* ii. 49; *Joseph. Antiq.* xviii. vi.), but they were of a different character to those of the Biblical period; they were *Nazarites for the whole life* (*Nasir* 4 a.) The Mishna presupposed their existence; the magical in Nazaritism, which was connected with the growing of the hair in the Nazarites of the Bible, gradually recedes into the back ground or loses its significance altogether; whereas the Levitical, the guarding against defilement, appears more and more in the foreground among the life long Nazarites. The Essenes then were such Nazarites as represented in private life the highest priestly consecration. The connection between the Nazarites and Essenes has already been indicated in obscure passages in the Talmud, that one consecrated himself to be a perpetual Nazarite if he simply wished to be a Nazarite in order that he

die der biblischen Zeit: sie waren Nasiräer fürs ganze Leben נזיר עלם (*Nasir* 4 a.). Die Mishna setzt das Vorhandensein solcher ohne Weiteres voraus, und das Magische an dem Nasiräerthum, das sich bei den biblischen Nasiräern an den Haarwuchs knüpfte, tritt immer mehr zurück, oder hat vielmehr gar keine Bedeutung mehr. נזיר עלם הכבד שער סקל בשער (das.). Hingegen tritt bei den lebenslänglichen Nasiräern das Levitische, die Hut vor Verunreinigung, immer mehr in den Vordergrund (das.). Die Essäer werden also solche Nasiräer gewesen sein, welche in ihrem Privatleben die höchste priesterliche Weihe darstellen wollten. Den Zusammenhang zwischen Nasiräern und Essäern deutet schon eine dunkle talmudische Stelle an, dass Jemand sich dadurch schon dem vollständigen Nasireat weibt, wenn er auch nur insofern Nasiräer sein will, um die Geheimnisse entlehrender Familienverhältnisse bewahren zu können: הריני נזיר אם לא אגלה כששחתי הרי נזיר לא אגלה כששחתי (*Tosifta Nasir* c. i. b. *Kiduschim* 71 a.). Die Erklärung dieser Stelle durch den Essenismus hat schon Edeles (מדרשאי) in seinem Agadacommentar z. St. geahnt. Diesen Zusammenhang zwischen Nasiräerthum und Essenismus haben Epiphanius und die arabischen Schriftsteller Makrisi und Abulfarag' geahnt; wenn auch Epiphanius die *Nazapaioi* von den *Ossaphoi* unterscheidet, so sind die Eigenheiten, die er von den Erstern berichtet, doch ganz essäisch. Ebenso hat Makrisi die Essäer in drei Secten zerspalt, in die Täufer *μυροβαπτισται* (מכדירין), die Essäer (מסאיתין) und in die Nasiräer (מחזקטין) (in *de Sacy Chrestomathie Arabe* Ausgabe von 1806, arabischer Theil 172 und tome ii, 218). Das arabische Makkabäerbuch bezeichnet die Essäer durch Chassidäer (c. xxv); in Josippon fehlen an der Stelle, wo er von den drei Secten spricht, gerade die Essäer (iv, 8, Breithaupt) Die Identität von Nasiräern, Essäern und Assidäern wird also von vielen Seiten bestätigt. Auch aus Josephus' Angabe, die Essäer hätten eigne Bücher gehabt (jüd. Kr. ii, 8, 7), lässt sich ihre Identität mit den Assidäern erweisen. Im Talmud (Jeruschalmi Berachot, Ende) wird aus einem Buche der Chassidäer der Satz mitgetheilt: „Verlässt du sie einen Tag, so verlässt sie dich zwei Tage“: נזיר נסיר אם תפנה יום ימים תפנה

might be able to preserve the secrets of disgraceful family circumstances. (*Tosifta Nasir*, b. i. 6 ; *Kidushim* 71 a.)<sup>20</sup>

1857.—The learned historian Jost, who published the first volume of his *History of Judaism* in 1857, was also perfectly convinced by the results of Frankel's researches, and made them the basis of his excellent description of the Essenes, in which he maintains that they grew out of Pharisaism or from the ancient *Chassidim*. "The Essenes," he submits, "are exactly the same that the other Rabbis wished to be who endeavoured to practise the Levitical law of purity, as leading to higher consecration. They have neither another creed nor another law, but simply institutions peculiar to this brotherhood, and endeavour to reach the highest consecration by their manner of life, in defining the different stages, according to preliminary exercises and certain years of preparation. Their views and tenets are therefore also to be found in the utterances of the learned and the Rabbis who did not enter their order, so that they did not look upon the Essenes as opponents or apostates, but, on the contrary, as holding the same opinions with increased claims and some fewer enjoyments, whom many out of their own midst joined, and who were called *Chassidim* or *Zenuim*." <sup>21</sup>

1857.—The comparatively few and unessential deviations from Judaism to be found in Essenism were, however, more than Herzfeld could tolerate, without characterising the innovators as heretics and smugglers of contraband opinions. Dissatisfied with the modern researches of Frankel and Graetz on this subject, this learned historian, and chief Rabbi of Brunswick, returned to the old notion of De Rossi, that the Essenes of Josephus and Philo are identical with the Baithusians mentioned in the Talmud. Still he thinks that De Rossi's

<sup>20</sup> *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. iv. Leipzig, 1856, p. 96-106 ; 518-528.

<sup>21</sup> *Geschichte des Judenthums und seiner Secten*, vol. I. Leipzig, 1857, p. 207-215.

opinion "must be better proved than he had done it," and therefore remarks—"first of all, seeing that the prefixed בית denotes school or sect in the appellations Beth-Shammai, Beth-Hillel; that בית הכותים in Tosifta Helem ii. b, and בי כותאי in Chullin 6 a, denotes the sect or the land of Cuttim; and then that בית סין stands twice Tosifta Succa, cap. iii., and Tosifta Menachoth cap. x. for Baithusians, can it mean anything else than house or sect of Essenes? When רפי physician became the name of a sect, an Essene could not so well be called רפי without ambiguity; he was therefore described as one of בית רפי." <sup>22</sup> Thus much for the origin of the name, and now let us hear Dr. Herzfeld's theory about the brotherhood itself. It is simply this <sup>23</sup>—"A Jew, who became acquainted with the allegorical exegesis prevalent among the Alexandrian Jews, and with its mother the Greek wisdom, but who, like Pythagoras, Plato and Herodotus, had also found

22 Die Essäer waren die Baitusim, wie schon R. Asarja de' Rossi vermuthet hat; es muss dies nur besser begründet werden, als von ihm geschehen ist. Ich beinerke zu dem Ende erstens, dass wie das vorgesetzte בית auch in den Benennungen Bet-Schammaj, Bet-Hillel Schule oder Fraction bedeutet, so Tosifta Kelim ii, 0 הכותים, בית הכותים, Chulin 6, a בי כותאי für die Sekte oder das Land der Cutim vorkommt; sodann dass Tosifta Succa, K. iii zweimal und Tosifta Menachot K. x. für Baitusim בית סין steht: kann dies wohl etwas Anderes als Haus, Sekte der Essener bedeuten? Als רפי (Arzt) Sektename wurde, konnte man den Essäer nicht gut mehr schlechthin רפי nennen, ohne undeutlich zu werden, man umschrieb ihn daher wohl als Einen vom רפי, bildete danach auch mit Zugrundelegung der Form Essener, das nachgewiesene בית סין, und zog dann Jenes zusammen, um den einzelnen Essäer zu bezeichnen, gab aber dieser Form den u-Laut, entweder nachdem man das syrische Wort רפי zuweilen nach syrischer Weise össeh, also dunkel ausgesprochen hatte, woher die Aussprache Ossener bei Epiphanius herrühren mag, oder was mir noch wahrscheinlicher ist, indem man dem Worte Peruschim conform Zedukim und Baitusim bildete.

23 Nach allem diesen scheint es, dass ein Jude, welcher mit der unter den alexandrinischen Juden aufblühenden allegorischen Exegese und mit deren Erzeugerin, der griechischen Weisheit, bekannt geworden war, daneben aber auch Gelegenheit gefunden hatte, von ägyptischen Priestern Manches zu lernen, wie Pythagoras selbst, Platon und Herodot, den Plan gefasst und ausgeführt habe, eklektisch hieraus und aus dem Judenthume ein speculatives und asketisches System sowie nach demselben aus jüdischen Asketen eine Sekte zu bilden. Dass es an Solchen nicht gefehlt habe, verbürgt das Vorkommen von Nasiräern, z. B. nach Tosifta Nasir K. iv unter Schimon dem Gerechten, ferner 1 Mack. iii, 49, und von ihrer 300 auf einmal unter Schimon ben Schatach nach Nasir jer. v, 3. Dass er aber nicht mit jüdischen Asketen in Aegypten diesen Versuch machte, geschah vielleicht, weil es damals dort noch an solchen Asketen fehlte, oder weil er selbst aus Judäa gebürtig sein mochte.

an opportunity to learn some things from Egyptian priests, conceived and carried out the plan, eclectically to form from it and from Judaism a speculative and ascetic system, as well as to organise, according to its model, a sect from the Jewish ascetics." <sup>24</sup> This Alexandrianized Palestinian Jew founded the order of the Essenes in Palestine about 230 B.C.

1857.—Another effort was made in this year to explain the origin of this mysterious brotherhood. Professor Hilgenfeld of Jena, who maintains their genuine Jewish origin, starts the notion that the Essenes belonged to the Apocalytical school, and that they must be regarded as the successors of the ancient prophets, and as constituting the prophetic school. It is only when we view them from this stand point that their precepts and practices can be understood, and that the high antiquity ascribed to them by Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 1, 2) and Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* v. 17), can be comprehended. This he moreover assures us gives the clue to the explanation of their name. The Hebrew prophets were also called *סוֹפְרִים* *seers*, which, being in the Aramaic pronunciation *סוֹר*, easily gave rise through Greek change of vowels to the name *Ἑσσαιῶν*, *Ἑσσηνοί*. Hilgenfeld manifests an almost inexcusable ignorance of the labours of Frankel and Graetz on the Essenes. <sup>25</sup>

1860.—A necessarily brief but interesting article on the Essenes, written by the able Mr. Westcott, appeared in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible. The writer wisely availed himself of the labours of Frankel and Jost, and properly traced the origin of the brotherhood to the Chassidim. His fear, however, lest any shining virtues in the Essenes might be thought by some to pale some of the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness, prevented him from appreciating the true

<sup>24</sup> Geschichte des Volkes Israel von Vollendung des Zweiten Tempels bis zur Einsetzung des Mackabäers Schimon zum hohen Priester und Fürsten, Zweiter Band. Nordhausen, 1857, p. 368-377; 387-409.

<sup>25</sup> Die jüdische Apokalyptik in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung. Jena, 1857, p. 245-278.

character of this order, as well as from seeing that they paved the way to Christianity.

1863.—Graetz again, in the second edition of the third volume of his *History of the Jews*, in which he has an additional chapter on the Rise and Progress of Christianity, goes to the other extreme, and maintains that Jesus simply appropriated to himself the essential features of Essenism,"<sup>16</sup> and that primitive Christianity was nothing but an offshoot from Essenism.

1862.—Of the article on the Essenes in Dr. Alexander's valuable edition of *Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, being written by me, I can do no more than say that it embodies the substance of this Essay.

1863.—The description of the Essenes in the new edition of Dean Milman's *History of the Jews*, gives a very imperfect idea both of the development and morality of this brotherhood.<sup>17</sup> The learned Dean seems to be wholly unacquainted with the researches of Frankel and Graetz on this subject. He, however, rightly rejects the notion that Essenism had its origin in Pythagorism.

1847.—After the above was printed, I found a notice of the Essenes in Hirschfeld's work on the *Hagadic Exegesis*, in which he submits that the name Essene may be derived from the Greek *ἥθος* *manners, morality, virtue*, that though the Essenes had several things in common with the Therapeutæ, yet there was a great difference between the two sects, and that the former rested more on the Bible and on Judaism. Still he affirms that "some Neo-Platonic, Pythagorean and Persian ideas found their way among the Essenes,

<sup>16</sup> *Geschichte der Juden*, Dritter Band Zweite Auflage. Leipzig, 1863, p. 216-232.

<sup>17</sup> *The History of the Jews from the earliest period down to modern times*. London, 1863, vol. ii. p. 110-116.



and brought with them some practices and institutions which this brotherhood mixed up with the Jewish views of religion, and amongst which are to be classed their extension of the laws of purification, &c." Hirschfeld, moreover, maintains that, "like the Alexandrians, but only from a different standpoint, the Essenes aimed to reconcile religion with science." As this opinion has already been discussed in this Essay, it is needless to repeat the objections against it.<sup>18</sup>

18 "Sie lieferte zwar nicht wissenschaftliche Resultate, aber ihr Leben deutet satissam darauf hin, dass ihre Bestrebungen darauf gerichtet waren, wie in Alexandrien, nur von einem andern Standpunct aus, die Religion und die Wissenschaft zu versöhnen." Der Geist der ersten Schriftauslegungen oder: Die hucadische Exegese. Berlin, 1847, p. 114, &c.

**THE KABBALAH**  
**ITS DOCTRINES, DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND LITERATURE**  
**AN ESSAY**

TO  
PERCY M. DOVE, F.I.A., F.S.S., ETC.,  
I AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBE THIS ESSAY  
AS AN EXPRESSION OF MY HIGH REGARD FOR HIM  
BOTH AS A FRIEND  
AND  
A CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

## PREFACE

WITH the exception of the notice in Basnage's *Histoire des Juifs*, which has been translated into English,<sup>1</sup> and the defective descriptions given by Allen<sup>2</sup> and Etheridge<sup>3</sup> of the Kabbalah in their respective works, no Treatise exists in English on this esoteric doctrine. It is this desideratum in the literature of our language which led me to bring the subject before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, in the form of an Essay; and the enquiries which have lately been made for a Manual to the Kabbalah have induced me to reprint the Essay in an separate form. Intending it to be a guide for those who wish to be initiated into the mysteries of this theosophy, I have aimed to be as elementary as possible in this Essay, and have, therefore, frequently explained

1 *The History of the Jews*, by M. Basnage, translated into English by Thom. Taylor, A.M. London, 1708.

2 *Modern Judaism*, p. 69-96, second edition. London, 1880.

3 *Jerusalem ad Tiberias; Sora ad Cordova*, p. 300, &c. London, 1856.

allusions to points in Jewish history and literature with which the more advanced scholar is perfectly familiar, but which are unknown to tyros in these departments.

If, in the perusal of this Manual, the student experiences any difficulty in understanding the technical terms of the Kabbalah, or if he is unable to remember the meaning of any phrases, he will find the difficulty obviated by referring to the Indices and Glossary, which have been appended to aid him in this respect.

For the Index of matters I am, to a great extent, indebted to my friend, JOHN NEWTON, Esq., M.R.C.S.E.

*Liverpool, July 7th, 1865.*

## I.

A SYSTEM of religious philosophy, or more properly of theosophy, which has not only exercised for hundreds of years an extraordinary influence on the mental development of so shrewd a people as the Jews, but has captivated the minds of some of the greatest thinkers of Christendom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, claims the greatest attention of both the philosopher and the theologian. When it is added that among its captives were Raymond Lully, the celebrated scholastic, metaphysician and chemist (died 1315); John Reuchlin, the renowned scholar and reviver of oriental literature in Europe (born 1455, died 1522); John Picus di Mirandola, the famous philosopher and classical scholar (1463-1494); Cornelius Henry Agrippa, the distinguished philosopher, divine and physician (1486-1535); John Baptist von Helmont, a remarkable chemist and physician (1577-1644); as well as our own countrymen Robert Fludd, the famous physician and philosopher (1574-1637), and Dr. Henry More (1614-1687); and that these men, after restlessly searching for a scientific system which should disclose to them "the deepest depths" of the Divine nature, and show them the real tie which binds all things together, found the cravings of their minds satisfied by this theosophy, the claims of the Kabbalah on the attention of students in literature and philosophy will readily be admitted. The claims of the Kabbalah, however, are not restricted to the literary

man and the philosopher : the poet too will find in it ample materials for the exercise of his lofty genius. How can it be otherwise with a theosophy which, we are assured, was born of God in Paradise, was nursed and reared by the choicest of the angelic hosts in heaven, and only held converse with the holiest of man's children upon earth. Listen to the story of its birth, growth and maturity, as told by its followers.

The Kabbalah was first taught by God himself to a select company of angels, who formed a theosophic school in Paradise. After the fall the angels most graciously communicated this heavenly doctrine to the disobedient child of earth, to furnish the protoplasts with the means of returning to their pristine nobility and felicity. From Adam it passed over to Noah, and then to Abraham, the friend of God, who emigrated with it to Egypt, where the patriarch allowed a portion of this mysterious doctrine to ooze out. It was in this way that the Egyptians obtained some knowledge of it, and the other Eastern nations could introduce it into their philosophical systems. Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, was first initiated into it in the land of his birth, but became most proficient in it during his wanderings in the wilderness, when he not only devoted to it the leisure hours of the whole forty years, but received lessons in it from one of the angels. By the aid of this mysterious science the lawgiver was enabled to solve the difficulties which arose during his management of the Israelites, in spite of the pilgrimages, wars and the frequent miseries of the nation. He covertly laid down the principles of this secret doctrine in the first four books of the Pentateuch, but withheld them from Deuteronomy. This constitutes the former the man, and the latter the woman. Moses also initiated the seventy elders into the secrets of this doctrine, and they again transmitted them from hand to hand. Of all who formed the

unbroken line of tradition, David and Solomon were most initiated into the Kabbalah. No one, however, dared to write it down, till Simon ben Jochai, who lived at the time of the destruction of the second Temple. Having been condemned to death by Titus, Rabbi Simon managed to escape with his son and concealed himself in a cavern where he remained for twelve years. Here, in this subterranean abode, he occupied himself entirely with the contemplation of the sublime Kabbalah, and was constantly visited by the Prophet Elias, who disclosed to him some of its secrets which were still concealed from the theosophical Rabbi. Here, too, his disciples resorted to be initiated by their master into these divine mysteries; and here, Simon ben Jochai expired with this heavenly doctrine in his mouth, whilst discoursing on it to his disciples. Scarcely had his spirit departed, when a dazzling light filled the cavern, so that no one could look at the Rabbi; whilst a burning fire appeared outside, forming as it were a sentinel at the entrance of the cave, and denying admittance to the neighbours. It was not till the light inside, and the fire outside, had disappeared, that the disciples perceived that the lamp of Israel was extinguished. As they were preparing for his obsequies, a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "Come ye to the marriage of Simon b. Jochai, he is entering into peace, and shall rest in his chamber!" A flame preceded the coffin, which seemed enveloped by, and burning like fire. And when the remains were deposited in the tomb, another voice was heard from heaven, saying, "This is he who caused the earth to quake, and the kingdoms to shake!" His son, R. Eliezer, and his secretary, R. Abba, as well as his disciples, then collated R. Simon b. Jochai's treatises, and out of these composed the celebrated work called *Sohar* (סוהר) i.e., *Splendour*, which is the grand storehouse of Kabbalism.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the followers



of this secret doctrine claim for it a pre-Adamic existence, and maintain that, ever since the creation of the first man, it has been received uninterruptedly from the hands of the patriarchs, the prophets, &c. It is for this reason that it is called *Kabbalah* (קבלה from קבץ to receive) which primarily denotes *reception*, and then *a doctrine received by oral tradition*. The Kabbalah is also called by some *Secret Wisdom* (חכמה נסתר), because it was only handed down by tradition through the initiated, and is indicated in the Hebrew Scriptures by signs which are hidden and unintelligible to those who have not been instructed in its mysteries. From the initial letters of this name, this theosophic system is also denominated *Grace* (חן = חסד). Vague and indefinite as this name may seem to the uninitiated, inasmuch as it conveys no idea whatever of the peculiar doctrines of the system, but simply indicates the manner in which they have been transmitted, it is nevertheless the classical and acknowledged appellation of this theosophy. The difference between the word *Kabbalah* (קבלה *receptio*) and the cognate term *Massorah* (מסורה *traditio*, from מסר to transmit)—which denotes *the traditionally transmitted* various readings of the Hebrew Scriptures—is, that the former expresses *the act of receiving*, which in this technical sense could only be on the part of one who has reached a certain period of life, as well as a certain state of sanctity, implying also a degree of secrecy; whilst the latter signifies *the act of giving over, surrendering*, without premising any peculiar age, stage of holiness, or degree of secrecy. The name, therefore, tells us no more than that this theosophy has been received traditionally. To ascertain its tenets we must analyze the system itself or the books which propound it; and to this task we now betake ourselves.

The cardinal doctrines of the Kabbalah are mainly designed to solve the grand problems about (1) The nature of the

Supreme Being, (II) The cosmogony, (III) The creation of angels and man, (IV) The destiny of man and the universe, and (V) To point out the import of the Revealed Law. Assenting and consenting to the declarations of the Hebrew Scriptures about the unity of God (Exod. xx, 3; Deut. iv, 35, 39; vi, 4; xxxii, 39), his incorporeity (Exod. xx, 4; Deut. iv, 15; Ps. xiv, 18), eternity (Exod. iii, 14; Deut. xxxii, 40; Isa. xli, 4; xliii, 10; xlv, 6; xlviii, 12), immutability (Mal. iii, 6), perfection (Deut. xxxii, 4; 2 Sam. xxii, 31; Job xxxviii, 16; Ps. xviii, 31), infinite goodness (Exod. xxxiv, 6; Ps. xxv, 10; xxxiii, 5; c, 5; cxlv, 9), the creation of the world in time according to God's free will (Gen. i, 1), the moral government of the universe and special providence, and to the creation of man in the image of God (Gen. i. 27), the Kabbalah seeks to explain the transition from the infinite to the finite; the procedure of multifariousness from an absolute unity, and of matter from a pure intelligence; the operation of pure intelligence upon matter, in spite of the infinite gulf between them; the relationship of the Creator to the creature, so as to be able to exercise supervision and providence. It, moreover, endeavours to show how it is that the Bible gives names and assigns attributes and a form to so spiritual a Being; how the existence of evil is compatible with the infinite goodness of God, and what is the Divine intention about this creation.

In our analysis of the Kabbalistic doctrines on these grand problems, we shall follow the order in which they have been enumerated, and accordingly begin with the lucubrations on the Supreme Being and the Emanations.

### *I. The Supreme Being and the doctrine and classification of the Emanations, or Sephiroth.*

Being boundless in his nature—which necessarily implies that he is an absolute unity and inscrutable, and that there

is nothing without him, or that the  $\tau\acute{o} \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$  is in him,<sup>1</sup>—God is called EN SOPH (אֵין סוֹפ) = *ἄπειρος Endless, Boundless*.<sup>2</sup> In this boundlessness, or as *the En Soph*, he cannot be comprehended by the intellect, nor described in words, for there is nothing which can grasp and depict him to us, and as such he is, in a certain sense, not existent (אֵין), because, as far as our minds are concerned, that which is perfectly incomprehensible does not exist.<sup>3</sup> To make his existence perceptible, and to render himself comprehensible, *the En Soph*, or *the Boundless*, had to become active and creative. But *the En Soph* cannot be the direct creator, for he has neither will, intention, desire, thought, language, nor action, as these properties imply limit and belong to finite beings, whereas *the En Soph* is boundless. Besides, the imperfect and circumscribed nature of the creation precludes the idea that the world was created or even designed by him, who can have no will nor produce anything but what is like himself, boundless and

1 דע כי אין סוף לא יכנס בהדדו וכל שכן בדבור ואף על פי שיש לו רמז בכל דבר שאין חוץ  
 Commentary of the ten Sephiroth, ed. Berlin, p. 4 a. This doctrine, however, that everything is in the Deity is not peculiar to the Kabbalah, it has been propounded by the Jews from time immemorial, before the Kabbalah came into existence, as may be seen from the following passage in the *Midrash*. "The Holy One, blessed be he, is the space of the universe, but the universe is not his space (אין הוא היקף העולם). R. Isaac submitted: from the passage אלוד קים (Deut. xxxiii, 27), we do not know whether the Holy One, blessed be he, is the habitation of the universe or the universe his habitation; but from the remark אדני מעון אחיה *Lord thou art the dwelling place* (Ps. xc, 1), it is evident that the Holy One, blessed be he, is the dwelling place of the universe, and not the universe his dwelling place." (*Bereshith Rabba*, § lxviii.) To the same effect is the remark of Philo, "God himself is the space of the universe, for it is he who contains all things." (*De Somniis*, i.) It is for this reason that God is called אֵין סוֹפ or אֵין סוֹפִים =  $\acute{o} \tau\acute{o} \pi\acute{o} \varsigma$ , locus, and that the Septuagint renders 'ישראל וגו' (Exod. xxiv, 10), by  $\kappa\alpha\iota \epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\nu \tau\acute{o} \nu \tau\acute{o} \pi\omicron\nu$ ,  $\delta\acute{\epsilon} \sigma\tau\eta\kappa\epsilon\iota \acute{o} \delta\epsilon\delta\omicron\varsigma$ , which has occasioned so much difficulty to interpreters.

2 לא ידע'לא אחיד מה דהוי בראשית דא דלא אחרב בנחמא ולא כנחלתו ובין כך  
 (Sohar iii, 233 b.) To the same effect is the ancient expository work on the doctrine of the Emanations which we quoted in the preceding note, comp. מה שאינו מוגבל קרוי אין סוף והוא ההשואה נמורה באחדות השלמה שאין בה שני ואם  
 Commentary on the ten Sephiroth, ed. Berlin, p. 2 a.

3 דע כי אין סוף אין לו רצון ולא כונה ולא חפץ ולא מחשבה ולא דבור ומעשה  
 ibid., 4 a.

perfect. On the other hand, again, the beautiful design displayed in the mechanism, the regular order manifested in the preservation, destruction, and renewal of things, forbid us to regard this world as the offspring of chance, and constrain us to recognize therein an intelligent design.<sup>4</sup> We are, therefore, compelled to view *the En Soph* as the creator of the world in an indirect manner.

Now, *the medium* by which *the En Soph* made his existence known in the creation of the world are ten *Sephiroth*<sup>5</sup> (ספירות) or *intelligences*, which emanated from the Boundless One (אין סוף) in the following manner:—At first *the En Soph*, or *the Aged of the Aged* (עתיקא דעתיקין) or *the Holy Aged* (עתיקא קדישא), as he is alternately called, sent forth from his infinite light one spiritual substance or intelligence. This first *Sephira*, which existed in *the En Soph* from all eternity, and became a reality by a mere act, has no less than seven appellations. It is called—I, *the Crown* (כתר), because it occupies the highest position; II, *the Aged* (עתיקא), because it is the oldest or the first emanation—and this name must not be confounded with *the Aged of the Aged*, which, as we have seen, is the appellation of *the En Soph*; III, *the Primordial Point* (נקודה ראשונה), or *the Smooth Point* (נקודה פשוטה), because, as the *Sohar* tells us, “When the Concealed of the Concealed wished to reveal himself, he first made a single

4 אם תאמר כי הוא בלבד כיון בגריאת עלמו יש להשיב על זה כי הכונה מורה על הסתין ואם תאמר שהנבחר הנמצא ממנו תחלה היה העולם הזה שהוא (העולם) חסר מהשלמותו חסר הכוח שהוא ממנו . . . ואם תאמר שלא כיון בגריאתו אם כן היתה הגריאה במקרה, וכל דבר הנא במקרה אין לו סדר, ואנו רואים כי הנבראים יש להם סדר, ועל סדר הם סתמיים, וכל סדר הם סתמיים, ועל סדר הם כהנבילים, ועל סדר הם סתמיים, *ibid.*, p. 2.

5 Both the etymology and the exact meaning of the word ספירה (plural ספירות) are matters of dispute. R. Azariel, the first Kabbalist, derives it from ספר *number*, whilst the later Kabbalists derive it alternately from ספיר *Saphir*, from the *שמים* ספירים (Ps. xix, 1), and from the Greek *σφαῖραι*, and are not at all certain whether to regard *the Sephiroth* as *principles* (*ἀρχαί*), or as *substances* (*ὑποστάσεις*), or as *potencies, powers* (*δυνάμεις*), or as *intelligent worlds* (*κόσμοι νοητικοί*), or as *attributes*, or as *entities* (עצמות), or as *organs of the Deity* (כלים).

point: the Infinite was entirely unknown, and diffused no light before this luminous point violently broke through into vision;" (*Sohar*, i, 15 a). IV, *the White Head* (רִישָׁא הַחוּרָה); V; *the Long Face*, *Macroprosopon* (אֲרִיד אֲנָפִין), because the whole ten *Sephiroth* represent the Primordial or the Heavenly Man (אָדָם עִילָאָה), of which the first *Sephira* is the head; VI, *The Inscrutable Height* (רוּם מַעְלָה), because it is the highest of all the *Sephiroth* proceeding immediately from the *En Soph*. Hence, on the passage "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold the King of Peace<sup>6</sup> with the Crown!" (*Song of Solomon* iii, 2) the *Sohar* remarks, "But who can behold the King of Peace, seeing that He is incomprehensible, even to the heavenly hosts? But he who sees the Crown sees the glory of the King of Peace." (*Sohar* ii. 100 b.) And, VII, it is expressed in the Bible by the Divine name *Ehejeh*, or *I Am* (אֲהִיָּה *Exod.* iii, 4), because it is absolute being, representing the Infinite as distinguished from the finite, and in the angelic order, by the celestial beasts of *Ezekiel*, called *Chajoth* (חַיִּוִּת). The first *Sephira* contained the other nine *Sephiroth*, and gave rise to them in the following order:—At first a masculine or active potency, designated *Wisdom* (חֲכָמָה), proceeded from it. This *Sephira*, which among the divine names is represented by *Jah* (יָה *Isa.* xxvi, 4), and among the angelic hosts by *Ophanim* (אֲפָנִים *Wheels*), sent forth an opposite, *i. e.* a feminine or passive, potency, denominated *Intelligence* (בִּינָה), which is represented by the divine name *Jehovah* (יְהוָה), and angelic name *Arelim* (אֲרָאִלִּים), and it is from a union of these two *Sephiroth*, which are also called *Father* (אָבָא) and *Mother* (אִמָּא), that the remaining seven *Sephiroth* proceeded. Or, as the *Sohar* (iii, 290 a) expresses it, "When the Holy Aged,

<sup>6</sup> The *Sohar*, like the Talmud, generally renders the words מֶלֶךְ שְׁלוֹמָה *King Solomon*; while verses in the *Song of Songs*, by מֶלֶךְ דִּלִּיָּה *the King to whom peace belongs*.

the Concealed of all Concealed, assumed a form, he produced everything in the form of male and female, as the things could not continue in any other form. Hence Wisdom, which is the beginning of development, when it proceeded from the Holy Aged, emanated in male and female, for Wisdom expanded, and Intelligence proceeded from it, and thus obtained male and female—viz., Wisdom, the father, and Intelligence, the mother, from whose union the other pairs of *Sephiroth* successively emanated." These two opposite potencies—viz., Wisdom (חכמה) and Intelligence (בינה)—are joined together by the first potency, the Crown (כתר); thus yielding the first triad of the *Sephiroth*.

From the junction of the foregoing opposites emanated again the masculine or active potency, denominated *Mercy* or *Love*, (חסד), also called *Greatness* (גדולה), the fourth *Sephira*, which among the divine names is represented by *El* (אל), and among the angelic hosts by *Chashmalim* (חשמולים, Comp. Ezek. i, 4). From this again emanated the feminine or passive potency, *Justice* (דין), also called *Judicial Power* (גבורה), the fifth *Sephira*, which is represented by the divine name *Eloha* (אלה), and among the angels by *Seraphim* (שרפים, Isa. vi, 6); and from this again the uniting potency, *Beauty* or *Mildness* (תפארת), the sixth *Sephira*, represented by the divine name *Elohim* (אלהים), and among the angels by *Shinanim* (שנאים, Ps. lxxviii, 18). Since without this union the existence of things would not be possible, inasmuch as mercy not tempered with justice, and justice not tempered with mercy would be unendurable: and thus the second trinity of the *Sephiroth* is obtained.

The medium of union of the second trinity, *i. e.* *Beauty* (תפארת), the sixth *Sephira*, beamed forth the masculine or active potency, *Firmness* (נצח), the seventh *Sephira*, corresponding to the divine name *Jehovah Sabaoth* (יהוה צבאות), and among the angels to *Tarshishim* (תרשישים, Dan. x. 6);

this again gave rise to the feminine or passive potency, *Splendour* (הוד), the eighth *Sephira*, to which answer the divine name *Elohim Sabaoth* (אלהים צבאות), and among the angels *Benei Elohim* (בני אלהים, Gen. vi. 4); and from it again, emanated *Foundation or the Basis* (יסוד), the ninth *Sephira*, represented by the divine name *El Chai* (אל חי), and among the angelic hosts by *Ishim* (אשים, Ps. civ. 4), which is the uniting point between these two opposites—thus yielding the third trinity of *Sephiroth*. From the ninth *Sephira*, the *Basis* (יסוד) of all, emanated the tenth, called *Kingdom* (מלכות), and *Shechinah* (שכינה), which is represented by the divine name *Adonai* (אדוני), and among the angelic hosts by *Cherubim* (כרובים). The table on the opposite page exhibits the different names of the *Sephiroth*, together with the several names of God and the angels, which correspond to them.

From this representation of each triad, as consisting of a threefold principle, viz., the two opposites, masculine and feminine, and the uniting principle, the development of the *Sephiroth*, and of life generally, is symbolically called *the Balance* (מתקלא), because the two opposite sexes, are compared with the two opposite scales, and the uniting *Sephira* is compared with the beam which joins the scales, and indicates its equipoise.

Before we enter into further particulars about the nature, operation, and classification of these *Sephiroth*, we shall give the *Sohar's* speculations about the Supreme Being, and its account of the origin of the *Sephiroth*, and their relationship to the Deity.

The prophet Elias having learned in the heavenly college the profound mystery and true import of the words in Isa. xl, 25, 26, "To whom will ye liken me, and shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who (מי) hath created these things (אלה)," revealed to R. Simon b. Jochai that God in his absolute nature is unknown

THE TEN SEPHIROTH.	THE TEN CORRESPONDING NAMES OF THE DEITY.	THE TEN CORRESPONDING CLASSES OF ANGELS.	THE TEN CORRESPONDING MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN BODY.
i. { 1. כֶּטֶר, CROWN. 2. עֲתִקָּה, THE AGED. 3. נִקְרָה רִאשׁוֹנָה, PRIMORDIAL POINT. 4. נִקְרָה שְׂמֹחָה, SMOOTH POINT. 5. רִשָּׁא הַחוּדָה, WHITE HEAD. 6. אִרְךְ אַנְפֵּיךְ, MACROPROSOPON. 7. אָדָם עִלְיָא, HEAVENLY MAN. 8. רוּם מַעְלָה, INSCRUTABLE HEIGHT.	} אֲנִי, I AM (Exod. iii. 4).	חַיִּים, ζῶν.	HEAD.
ii. חָכְמָה, σοφία, WISDOM.	יָהּ, JAH (Isa. xvi. 4).	מוֹפְתִים, μύησις.	BRAINS.
iii. בִּינָה, νοῦς, INTELLIGENCE.	יְהוָה, JEHOVAH.	אֲרַמִּלִּים, ARELIM (Isa. xxxiii. 7).	HEART.
iv. { 1. אֶחָד, ἄρισ, LOVE. 2. גְּדוּלָּה, GREATNESS.	} אֵל, THE MIGHTY ONE.	חַשְׁהַרְאִלִּים, CHASHERALIM (Ezek. i. 4).	RIGHT ARM.
v. { 1. דִּין, JUDGMENT. 2. שְׁפָט, JUSTICE. 3. גְּבוּרָה, STRENGTH.	} אֵל, THE ALMIGHTY.	שֶׂרָפִים, SERAPHIM (Isa. vi. 7).	LEFT ARM.
vi. תְּשָׁבַח, BEAUTY.	אֱלֹהִים, GOD.	שִׁינָאִים, SHINANIM (Ps. lxxviii. 18).	CHEST.
vii. נִצָּח, FIRMNESS.	יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, JEHOVAH SABAOOTH	תַּרְשִׁישִׁים, TARSHISHIM (Dan. x. 6).	RIGHT LEG.
viii. הֹד, SPLENDOUR.	אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת, GOD SABAOOTH.	בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים, THE SONS OF GOD (Gen. vi. 4).	LEFT LEG.
ix. יְסֹד, FOUNDATION.	אֵל חַי, MIGHTY LIVING ONE.	אִשִּׁים, ISHIM (Ps. civ. 4).	GENITAL ORGANS.
x. { 1. מַלְכוּת, βασιλεία sc. τῶν οὐρανῶν, KINGDOM. 2. שְׁכִינָה, SHECHINAH.	} אֲדֹנָי, THE LORD.	כְּרוּבִים, CHERUBIM.	UNION OF THE WHOLE BODY.



and incomprehensible, and hence, in a certain sense, non-existent; that this *Who* (אלה *unknown subject*) had to become active and creative, to demonstrate his existence, and that it is only by these (אלה) works of creation that he made himself known to us. It is therefore the combination of the unknown *Who* (מי) with *these visible* (אלה) works that showed him to be God (אלהים) which is produced by מ transposed, i. e. ים, and united with אלה). Or, as it is in the language of the Kabbalah;—

“Before he gave any shape to this world, before he produced any form, he was alone, without a form and resemblance to anything else. Who then can comprehend him how he was before the creation, since he was formless? Hence it is forbidden to represent him by any form, similitude, or even by his sacred name, by a single letter or a single point; and to this the words ‘Ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you’ (Deut. iv, 15)—i.e. ye have not seen anything which you could represent by any form or likeness—refer. But after he created the form of *the Heavenly Man* (אדם עלאה), he used it as a chariot (מרכבה) wherein to descend, and wishes to be called by this form, which is the sacred name Jehovah. He wishes to be known by his attributes, and each attribute separately; and therefore had himself called the God of Mercy, the God of Justice, Almighty, God of Sabaoth, and the Being. He wishes thereby to make known his nature, and that we should see how his mercy and compassion extend both to the world and to all operations. For if he had not poured out his light upon all his creatures, how could we ever have known him? How could the words be fulfilled, ‘The whole earth is full of his glory’ (Isa. vi, 3)? Woe be to him who compares him with his own attributes! or still worse with the son of man whose foundation is in the dust, who vanishes and is no more! Hence, the form in which we delineate him simply describes

each time his dominion over a certain attribute, or over the creatures generally. We cannot understand more of his nature than the attribute expresses. Hence, when he is divested of all these things, he has neither any attribute nor any similitude or form. The form in which he is generally depicted is to be compared to a very expansive sea; for the waters of the sea are in themselves without a limit or form, and it is only when they spread themselves upon the earth that they assume a form (דמיון). We can now make the following calculation: the *source* of the sea's water and the *water stream* proceeding therefrom to spread itself are *two*. A great reservoir is then formed, just as if a huge hollow had been dug; this reservoir is called sea, and is the *third*. The unfathomable deep divides itself into *seven streams*, resembling seven long vessels. The source, the water stream, the sea and the seven streams make together *ten*. And when the master breaks the vessels which he has made, the waters return to the source, and then only remain the pieces of these vessels, dried up and without any water. It is in this way that the Cause of Causes gave rise to the *ten Sephiroth*. The Crown is the source from which streams forth an infinite light: hence the name *En Soph* (אין סוף) = *infinite*, by which the highest cause is designated: for it then had neither form nor shape, and there is neither any means whereby to comprehend it, nor a way by which to know it. Hence it is written, 'Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength.' (Eccclus. iii, 21.) He then made a vessel, as small as a point, like the letter 'י', which is filled from this source (i.e. the *En Soph*). This is the source of wisdom, *wisdom itself* (חכמה), after which the Supreme Cause is called '*wise God*.' Upon this he made a large vessel like a sea, which is called *Intelligence* (בינה): hence the name '*intelligent God*.' It must, however, be remarked that God is wise, and through himself, for

wisdom does not derive its name through itself, but through the wise one who fills it with the light which flows from him, just as intelligence is not comprehended through itself, but through him who is intelligent and fills it with his own substance. God needs only to withdraw himself and it would be dried up. This is also the meaning of the words, 'the waters have disappeared from the sea, and the bed is dry and parched up.' (Job xiv, 11.) The sea is finally divided into seven streams, and the seven costly vessels are produced, which are called *Greatness* (גדולה), *Judicial Strength* (גבורה), *Beauty* (תפארת), *Firmness* (נצח), *Splendour* (הוד), *Foundation* (יסוד), and *Kingdom* (מלכות). Therefore is he called the Great or the Merciful, the Mighty, the Glorious, the God of victory, the Creator, to whom all praise is due, and the Foundation of all things. Upon the last attribute all the others are based as well as the world. Finally, he is also the King of the universe, for everything is in his power; he can diminish the number of the vessels, and increase in them the light which streams from them, or reduce it, just as it pleases him." (*Sohar*, i, 42 b, 43 a, section גא.)

In another place again the same authority gives the following description of the Deity and the emanation of the *Sephiroth*. "The Aged of the Aged, the Unknown of the Unknown, has a form and yet has no form.. He has a form whereby the universe is preserved, and yet has no form, because he cannot be comprehended. When he first assumed the form [of the first *Sephira*], he caused nine splendid lights to emanate from it, which, shining through it, diffused a bright light in all directions. Imagine an elevated light sending forth its rays in all directions. Now if we approach it to examine the rays, we understand no more than that they emanate from the said light. So is the Holy Aged an absolute light, but in himself concealed and incomprehensible. We can only comprehend him through those luminous emanations (ספירות) which

again are partly visible and partly concealed. These constitute the sacred name of God." (*Idra Suta, Sohar*, iii, 288 a.)

Four things must be borne in mind with regard to the *Sephiroth*. I. That they were not created by, but emanated (נמצל) from, *the En Soph*; the difference between creation and emanation being, that in the former a diminution of strength takes place, whilst in the latter this is not the case.<sup>7</sup> II. That they form among themselves, and with *the En Soph*, a strict unity, and simply represent different aspects of one and the same being, just as the different rays which proceed from the light, and which appear different things to the eye, form only different manifestations of one and the same light. III. That since they simply differ from each other as the different colours of the same light, all the ten emanations alike partake of the perfections of *the En Soph*; and IV, that, as emanations from the Infinite, the *Sephiroth* are infinite and perfect like *the En Soph*, and yet constitute the first finite things.<sup>8</sup> They are infinite and perfect when *the En Soph* imparts his fulness to them, and finite and imperfect when the fulness is withdrawn from them, so that in this respect these ten *Sephiroth* exactly correspond to the double nature of Christ,—his finite and imperfect human nature and his infinite and perfect divine nature.

In their totality and unity these *ten Sephiroth* are not only denominated *the world of Sephiroth* (עולם הספירות) and *the world of Emanations* (עולם אצילות), but represent and are called the *Primordial or Archetypal Man* (אדם קדמון = *πρωτόγονος*), and *the Heavenly Man* (אדם עילאה). In the figure, the Crown (כתר) is *the head*; Wisdom (חכמה), *the brains*; and Intelligence (בינה), which unites the two and

7 כי כל בריאה שנוכלק ממנה חזקתם ותהחזר . . . כח האצילות שנוכלק ממנו חזקתו  
חזר, Commentary on the ten Sephiroth, 2 b; 4 a.

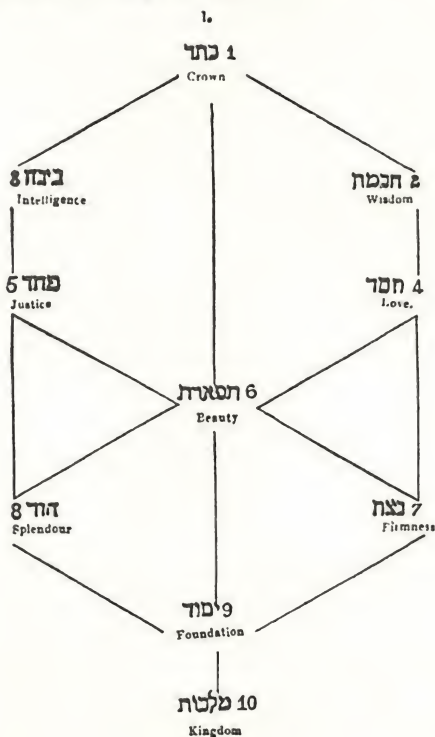
8 העשרות שהם כח השלם וכח החזק כשהם מקבלים מהשפע הנא מהשלמותו הם כח  
שלם ובהמנע השפע מהם יש בהם כח חסר וכך יש בהם כח לשלם בהשלמה ובהשקט

produces the first triad, is *the heart or the understanding*—thus forming *the head*. The fourth and fifth *Sephiroth*, *i.e.*, Mercy (חסד) and Justice (פחד), are the two arms of the Lord, the former the right arm and the latter the left, one distributing life and the other death. And the sixth *Sephira*, Beauty (תפארת), which unites these two opposites and produces the second triad, is *the chest*; whilst the seventh and eighth *Sephiroth*,—*i.e.*, Firmness (נצח) and Splendour (הוד), of the third triad,—are *the two legs*; and Foundation (יסוד), the ninth *Sephira*, represents the *genital organs*, since it denotes the basis and source of all things. Thus it is said “Every thing will return to its origin just as it proceeded from it. All marrow, all sap, and all power are congregated in this spot. Hence all powers which exist originate through the genital organs.” (*Sohar*, iii, 290 a.) Kingdom (מלכות), the tenth *Sephira*, represents the harmony of the whole Archetypal Man. The following is the archetypal figure of the ten *Sephiroth*.

It is this form which the prophet Ezekiel saw in the mysterious chariot, and of which the earthly man is a faint copy. Moreover, these *Sephiroth*, as we have already remarked, created the world and all things therein according to their own archetype or in the likeness and similitude of the *Heavenly Man* or the *World of Emanations*. But, before we propound the Kabbalistic doctrine of the creation of the world, it is necessary to describe a second mode in which the trinity of triads in the *Sephiroth* is represented, and to mention the appellations and offices of the respective triads.

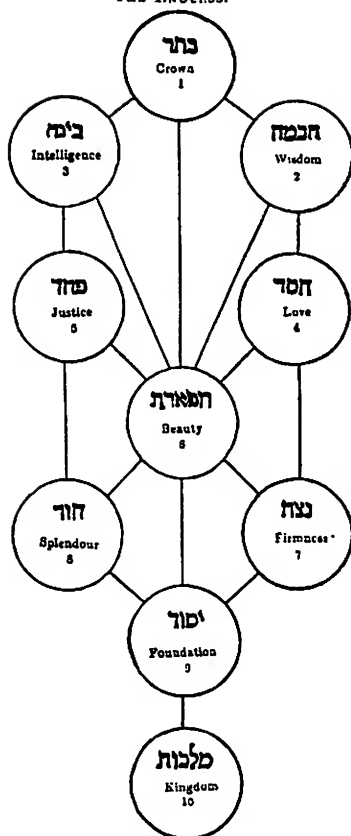
Now in looking at the *Sephiroth* which constitute the first triad, it will be seen that they represent *the intellect*; hence this triad is called *the Intellectual World* (עולם מושכל). The second triad, again, represents *moral qualities*; hence it is designated *the moral or Sensuous World* (עולם מורגש): whilst the third triad represents *power and stability*, and

hence is designated *the Material World* (עולם המוטבע). These three aspects in which *the En Soph* manifested himself are called *the Faces* (אנפין and פרצופין = πρόσωπον, the two words are identical, the former being pure Aramaic, and the latter from the Greek). In the arrangement of this trinity of triads, so as to produce what is called the Kabbalistic tree, denominated *the Tree of Life* (עץ חיים), or simply *the Tree* (אילן), the first triad is placed above, the second and third are placed below, in such a manner that the three masculine *Sephiroth* are on the right, the three feminine on the left, whilst the four uniting *Sephiroth* occupy the centre, as shown in the following diagrams:—



אין סוף

THE ENDLESS.



The three *Sephiroth* on the right, representing the principle of mercy (חסד), are called *the Pillar of Mercy* (סטרא ימינא) (עמודא דחסד); the three on the left, representing the principle of rigour (דין), are denominated *the Pillar of Judgment* (סטרא דשמאלא עמודא דדינה); whilst the four *Sephiroth* in the centre, representing mildness (רחמים),

are called *the Middle Pillar* (עמודא דאמצעיתא). Each *Sephira* composing this trinity of triads is, as it were, a trinity in itself. I, It has its own absolute character; II, It receives from above; and III, It communicates to what is below it. Hence the remark, "Just as the Sacred Aged is represented by the number three, so are all the other lights (*Sephiroth*) of a threefold nature." (*Sohar*, iii, 288 b.) Within this trinity in each unit and trinity of triads there is a trinity of units, which must be explained before we can propound the Kabbalistic view of the cosmogony.

We have seen that three of the *Sephiroth* constitute uniting links between three pairs of opposites, and by this means produce three triads, respectively denominated the Intellectual World, the Senuous or Moral World, and the Material World, and that these three uniting *Sephiroth*, together with the one which unites the whole into a common unity, form what is called *the Middle Pillar* of the Kabbalistic tree. Now from the important position they thus occupy, these *Sephiroth* are synecdochically used to represent the worlds which by their uniting potency they respectively yield. Hence the *Sephira*, CROWN (כתר), from which the *Sephiroth*, WISDOM (חכמה) and INTELLIGENCE (בינה), emanated, and by which they are also united, thus yielding *the Intellectual World*, is by itself used to designate the Intellectual World (עולם המוטבע). Its own names, however, are not changed in this capacity, and it still continues to be designated by the several appellations mentioned in the description of the first *Sephira*. The sixth *Sephira*, called BEAUTY (תפארת), which unites *Sephiroth* IV (הסדר, *Love*) and V (פחד, *Justice*), thus yielding *the Senuous World*, is by itself used to denote the Senuous World, and in this capacity is called *the Sacred King* (מלכא קדישא), or simply *the King* (מונחא); whilst the *Sephira* called KINGDOM (מלכות), which unites the whole *Sephiroth*, is here used to represent the Material World,



instead of the ninth *Sephira*, called FOUNDATION (יסוד), and is in this capacity denominated *the Queen* (מלכתא) or the *Matron* (מטרוניתא). Thus we obtain within the trinity of triads a higher trinity of units,—viz., *the Crown* (כתר), *Beauty* (תפארת), and *Kingdom* (מלכות),—which represents the potencies of all the *Sephiroth*.

## II. *The Creation or the Kabbalistic Cosmogony.*

Having arrived at the highest trinity which comprises all the *Sephiroth*, and which consists of *the Crown*, *the King*, and *the Queen*, we shall be able to enter into the cosmogony of the Kabbalah. Now, it is not *the En Soph* who created the world, but this trinity, as represented in the combination of the *Sephiroth*; or rather the creation has arisen from the conjunction of the emanations. The world was born from the union of the crowned King and Queen; or, according to the language of the Kabbalah, these opposite sexes of royalty, who emanated from the *En Soph*, produced the universe in their own image. Worlds, we are told, were indeed created before ever the King and Queen or the *Sephiroth* gave birth to the present state of things, but they could not continue, and necessarily perished, because the *En Soph* had not yet assumed this human form in its completeness, which not only implies a moral and intellectual nature, but, as conditions of development, procreation, and continuance, also comprises sexual opposites. This creation, which aborted and which has been succeeded by the present order of things, is indicated in Gen. xxxvi, 31—40. The kings of Edom, or the old kings as they are also denominated, who are here said to have reigned before the monarchs of Israel, and are mentioned as having died one after the other, are those primordial worlds which were successively convulsed and destroyed; whilst the sovereigns of Israel denote the King and Queen who emanated from the *En Soph*, and who have given birth to and perpetuate the present world. Thus we are told:—

"Before the Aged of the Aged, the Concealed of the Concealed, expanded into the form of King, the Crown of Crowns [*i.e.* the first *Sephira*], there was neither beginning nor end. He hewed and incised forms and figures into it [*i.e.* the crown] in the following manner:—He spread before him a cover, and carved therein kings [*i.e.* worlds], and marked out their limits and forms, but they could not preserve themselves. Therefore it is written, 'These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.' (Gen. xxxvi, 31.) This refers to the primordial kings and primordial Israel. All these were imperfect: he therefore removed them and let them vanish, till he finally descended himself to this cover and assumed a form." (*Idra Rabba, Sohar*, iii, 148 a.)

This important fact that worlds were created and destroyed prior to the present creation is again and again reiterated in *the Sohar*.<sup>9</sup> These worlds are compared with sparks which fly out from a red hot iron beaten by a hammer, and which are extinguished according to the distance they are removed from the burning mass. "There were old worlds," *the Sohar* tells us, "which perished as soon as they came into existence: were formless, and they were called sparks. Thus the smith when hammering the iron, lets the sparks fly in all directions. These sparks are the primordial worlds, which could not continue, because the Sacred Aged had not as yet assumed his form [of opposite sexes—the King and Queen], and the master was not yet at his work." (*Idra Suta, Sohar*, iii, 292 b.) But since nothing can be annihilated—"Nothing perisheth in this world, not even the breath which issues from the

<sup>9</sup> The notion, however, that worlds were created and destroyed prior to the present creation, was propounded in *the Midrash* long before the existence of the Kabbalah. Thus on the verse, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good" (Gen. i, 31), R. Abahu submits מ"ר אבדו מן העולם הזה בורא עולמות ומחריבן ובורא עולמות ומחריבן עד שבא זה אלו אמר ר' יוחנן לא הניח לי ייחוד לא הניח לי from this we see that the Holy One, blessed be he, had successively created and destroyed sundry worlds before he created the present world, and when he created the present world he said, this pleases me, the previous ones did not please me. (*Bereshith Rabba*, section or Parsha ix.)

mouth, for this, like everything else, has its place and destination, and the Holy One, blessed be his name! turns it into his service;" (*Sohar*, ii, 110 b.)—these worlds could not be absolutely destroyed. Hence when the question is asked—"Why were these primordial worlds destroyed?" the reply is given—"Because the Man, represented by the ten *Sephiroth*, was not as yet. The human form contains every thing, and as it did not as yet exist, the worlds were destroyed." It is added, "Still when it is said that they perished, it is only meant thereby that they lacked the true form, till the human form came into being, in which all things are comprised, and which also contains all those forms. Hence, though the Scripture ascribes death (*וימור*) to the kings of Edom, it only denotes a sinking down from their dignity, *i.e.*, the worlds up to that time did not answer to the Divine idea, since they had not as yet the perfect form of which they were capable." (*Idra Rabba*, *Sohar*, iii, 135 b.)

It was therefore after the destruction of previous worlds, and after the *En Soph* or the Boundless assumed the Sefiric form, that the present world was created. "The Holy One, blessed be he, created and destroyed several worlds before the present one was made, and when this last work was nigh completion, all the things of this world, all the creatures of the universe, in whatever age they were to exist, before ever they entered into this world, were present before God in their true form. Thus are the words of Ecclesiastes to be understood 'What was, shall be, and what has been done, shall be done.'" (*Sohar*, iii, 61 b.) "The lower world is made after the pattern of the upper world; every thing which exists in the upper world is to be found as it were in a copy upon earth; still the whole is one." (*Ibid* ii, 20 a.)

This world, however, is not a creation *ex nihilo*, but is simply an immanent offspring and the image of the King and Queen, or, in other words, a farther expansion or evolution of

*the Sephiroth* which are the emanations of *the En Soph*. This is expressed in *the Sohar* in the following passage—"The indivisible point [the Absolute], who has no limit, and who cannot be comprehended because of his purity and brightness, expanded from without, and formed a brightness which served as a covering to the indivisible point, yet it too could not be viewed in consequence of its immeasurable light. It too expanded from without, and this expansion was its garment. Thus everything originated through a constant upheaving agitation, and thus finally the world originated." (*Sohar*, i, 20 a.) The universe therefore is an immanent emanation from *the Sephiroth*, and reveals and makes visible the Boundless and the Concealed of the Concealed. And though it exhibits the Deity in less splendour than its parents the *Sephiroth*, because it is further removed from the primordial source of light, yet, as it is God manifested, all the multifarious forms in the world point out the unity which they represent; and nothing in it can be destroyed, but everything must return to the source whence it emanated. Hence it is said that "all things of which this world consists, spirit as well as body, will return to their principal, and the root from which they proceeded." (*Sohar*, ii, 218 b.) "He is the beginning and end of all the degrees in the creation. All these degrees are stamped with his seal, and he cannot be otherwise described than by the unity. He is one, notwithstanding the innumerable forms which are in him." (*Ibid* i, 21 a.)

Now these *Sephiroth*, or *the World of Emanations* (עולם אצילות), or the *Atzilatic World*, gave birth to three worlds in the following order:—From the conjunction of the KING and QUEEN (i.e., the *ten Sephiroth*) proceeded—I. *The World of Creation*, or the *Briatic World* (עולם הבריאה), also called *The Throne* (כורסיא), which is the abode of pure spirits, and which, like its parents, consists of ten *Sephiroth*, or *Emanations*. The *Briatic World*, again, gave rise to,

II. *The World of Formation*, or the *Jetziratic World* (עולם היצירה), which is the habitation of the angels, and also consists of ten *Sephiroth*; whilst the *Jetziratic World*, again, sent forth, III. *The World of Action*, or the *Assiatic World* (עולם העשיה), also called *the World of Keliphoth* (עולם הקליפות), which contains *the Spheres* (גלגלים) and matter, and is the residence of the Prince of Darkness and his legions. Or, as the *Sohar* describes it—"After the *Sephiroth*, and for their use, God made *the Throne* (*i.e.*, the World of Creation), with four legs and six steps, thus making ten (*i.e.*, the decade of *Sephiroth* which each world has). . . . For this Throne and its service he formed the ten Angelic hosts (*i.e.*, the World of Formation), *Malachim*, *Arelim*, *Chajoth*, *Ophanim*, *Chashmalim*, *Elim*, *Elohim*, *Benei Elohim*, *Ishim*, and *Seraphim* (מלאכים אראלים חיות אופנים חשמלים אלים), and for their service, again, he made Samaël and his legions (*i.e.*, the World of Action), who are, as it were, the clouds upon which the angels ride in their descent on the earth, and serve, as it were, for their horses. Hence it is written—"Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt." (Isa. xix, 1.) (*Sohar* ii, 43 a.) There are, therefore, *four* worlds, each of which has a separate Sephiric system, consisting of a decade of emanations. I. *The Atzilatic World*, called alternately *the World of Emanations* (עולם אצילות), *the Image* (דיוקנא) = εἰκὼν with ד prefixed), and *the Heavenly Man* (אדם עלאה), which, by virtue of its being a direct emanation from God and most intimately allied with the Deity, is perfect and immutable. II. *The Briatic World*, called *the World of Creation* (עולם הבריאה) and *the Throne* (כורסיא), which is the immediate emanation of the former, and whose *ten Sephiroth*, being further removed from the *En Soph*, are of a more limited and circumscribed potency, though the substances they comprise are of the purest nature and without

any admixture of matter. III. *The Jetziratic World*, called *the World of Formation* (עולם היצירה) and *the World of Angels* (מלאכיא), which proceeded from the former world, and whose *ten Sephiroth*, though of a still less refined substance than the former, because further removed from the primordial source, are still without matter. It is in this angelic world where those intelligent and uncorporeal beings reside, who are wrapped in a luminous garment, and who assume a sensuous form when they appear to man. And IV. *The Assiatic World*, called *the World of Action* (עולם העשיה) and *the World of Matter* (עולם הקליפות) which emanated from the preceding world, the *ten Sephiroth* of which are made up of the grosser elements of all the former three worlds, and which has sunk down in consequence of its materiality and heaviness. Its substances consist of matter limited by space and perceptible to the senses in a multiplicity of forms. It is subject to constant changes, generations, and corruptions, and is the abode of the Evil Spirit.

Before leaving this doctrine about the creation and the relationship of the Supreme Being to the universe, we must reiterate two things. I. Though the trinity of *the Sephiroth* gave birth to the universe, or, in other words, is an evolution of the emanations, and is thus a further expansion of the Deity itself, it must not be supposed that the Kabbalists believe in a Trinity in our sense of the word. Their view on this subject will best be understood from the following remark in *the Sohar*—"Whoso wishes to have an insight into the sacred unity, let him consider a flame rising from a burning coal or a burning lamp. He will see first a twofold light, a bright white and a black or blue light; the white light is *above*, and ascends in a direct light, whilst the blue or dark light is *below*, and seems as the chair of the former, yet both are so intimately connected together that they constitute only one flame. The seat, however, formed by the

blue or dark light, is again connected with the burning matter which is *under it* again. The white light never changes its colour, it always remains white; but various shades are observed in the lower light, whilst the lowest light, moreover, takes two directions—*above* it is connected with the white light, and *below* with the burning matter. Now this is constantly consuming itself, and perpetually ascends to the upper light, and thus everything merges into a single unity (וְכֹלָא אֶתְקַשֵּׁר בִּיחּוּדָא חָד) *Sohar*, i, 51 a).<sup>10</sup> And II. The creation, or the universe, is simply the garment of God woven from the Deity's own substance; or, as Spinoza expresses it, God is the immanent basis of the universe. For although, to reveal himself to us, the Concealed of all the Concealed sent forth the ten emanations called the *Form of God*, *Form of the Heavenly Man*, yet since even this luminous form was too dazzling for our vision, it had to assume another form, or had to put on another garment which consists of the universe. The universe, therefore, or the visible world, is a further expansion of the Divine Substance, and is called in the Kabbalah "*the Garment of God*." Thus we are told, "when the Concealed of all the Concealed wanted to reveal himself, he first made a point [*i.e.* the first *Sephira*], shaped it into a sacred form [*i.e.* the totality of the *Sephiroth*], and covered it with a rich and splendid garment that is the world." (*Sohar*, i, 2 a).

### III. *The Creation of Angels and Men.*

The different worlds which successively emanated from the *En Soph* and from each other, and which sustain the relationship to the Deity of first, second, third, and fourth generations, are, with the exception of the first (*i.e.*, the World of Emanations), inhabited by spiritual beings of various grades.

<sup>10</sup> The question, however, about the doctrine of the Trinity in other passages of the *Sohar* will be discussed more amply in the sequel, where we shall point out the relation of the Kabbalah to Christianity.





*World* (עולם יצירה), and who are divided into ten ranks, answering to the *ten Sephiroth*. Each of these angels is set over a different part of the universe. One has the control of one sphere, another of another heavenly body; one angel has charge of the sun, another of the moon, another of the earth, another of the sea, another of the fire, another of the wind, another of the light, another of the seasons, &c. &c.; and these angels derive their names from the heavenly bodies they respectively guard. Hence one is called Venus (ננה), one Mars (מאדמים), one the substance of Heaven (עצם השמים), one the angel of light (אוריאל), and another the angel of fire (נוריאל.) (Comp. *Sohar* i, 42, &c.) The demons, constituting the second class of angels, which are the grossest and most deficient of all forms, and are *the shells* (קליפות) of being, inhabit the third habitable or *Assiatic World* (עולם עשיה). They, too, form ten degrees, answering to the decade of *Sephiroth*, in which darkness and impurity increase with the descent of each degree. Thus the two first degrees are nothing more than the absence of all visible form and organisation, which the Mosaic cosmology describes in the words *תהו ובהו* before the hexahemeron, and which the Septuagint renders by ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος. The third degree is the abode of the darkness which the book of Genesis describes as having in the beginning covered the face of the earth. Whereupon follow seven infernal halls (שבע היכלות) = HELLS, occupied by the demons, which are the incarnation of all human vices, and which torture those poor deluded beings who suffered themselves to be led astray in this world. These seven infernal halls are subdivided into endless compartments, so as to

The termination ך has been appended to סבדך to obtain the same numerical value, as סדי. The derivation of it from *μετὰ θρόνον*, because this angel is immediately under the divine throne (כורסיא), which is maintained by Frank (Kabbala, p. 43), Graetz (*Gnosticismus*, p. 44) and others, has been shown by Frankel (*Zeitschrift*, 1846. vol. iii, p. 113), and Cassel (*Ersch und Gruber's Encyclop.* section ii, vol. xxvii, p. 41), to be both contrary to the form of the word and to the description of Metatron.

afford a separate chamber of torture for every species of sin. The prince of this region of darkness, who is called Satan in the Bible, is denominated by the Kabbalah, *Samaël* (סמאל) = *angel of poison or of death*. He is the same evil spirit, Satan, the serpent, who seduced Eve.<sup>12</sup> He has a wife, called the Harlot or the Woman of Whoredom (אשת זנונים), but they are both generally represented as united in the one name of *the Beast* (חיה). Comp. *Sohar*, ii, 255—259, with i, 35 b.)

The whole universe, however, was incomplete, and did not receive its finishing stroke till man was formed, who is the acme of the creation, and the microcosm uniting in himself the totality of beings. "The HEAVENLY ADAM (*i.e.*, the ten *Sephiroth*), who emanated from the highest primordial obscurity (*i.e.*, the *En Soph*), created the EARTHLY ADAM." (*Sohar*, ii, 70 b.) "Man is both the import and the highest degree of creation, for which reason he was formed on the sixth day. As soon as man was created, everything was complete, including the upper and nether worlds, for everything is comprised in man. He unites in himself all forms." (*Sohar*, iii, 48 a.)<sup>13</sup> Man was created with faculties and features far transcending those of the angels. The bodies of the protoplasts were not of that gross matter which constitutes our bodies. Adam and Eve, before the fall, were wrapped in that luminous ethereal substance in which the celestial spirits are clad, and which is neither subject to want nor to sensual desires. They were envied by the angels of the highest rank. The fall, however, changed it all, as we are told in the following passage—"When Adam

12 The view that the serpent which seduced the protoplasts is identical with Satan is not peculiar to the Kabbalah. It is stated in the *Talmud* in almost the same words *הוא המלך המות כמחיתא תנא יוד ומשך עלה* and *הוא יצר הרע הוא השטן הוא מלאך המות כמחיתא תנא יוד ומשך עלה* *the evil spirit, Satan, and the angel of death, are the same. It is propounded in the Horeitha that he descends and seduces; he then ascends and accuses, and then comes down again and kills.* Baba Bathra, 16 a.

13 כיון דנברא אדם אחתהן כלא וכל מה דלעילא ותתא וכלא אתכליל באדם ... איזו שלימותא רכלא. ודור דלק ג' דף כ"ח א'

dwelled in the garden of Eden, he was dressed in the celestial garment, which is a garment of heavenly light. But when he was expelled from the garden of Eden, and became subject to the wants of this world, what is written? 'The Lord God made coats of skins unto Adam and to his wife, and clothed them' (Gen. iii, 21); for prior to this they had garments of light—light of that light which was used in the garden of Eden." (*Sohar*, ii, 229 b.) The garments of skin, therefore, mean our present body, which was given to our first parents in order to adapt them to the changes which the fall introduced.

But even in the present form, the righteous are above the angels,<sup>14</sup> and every man is still the microcosm, and every member of his body corresponds to a constituent part of the visible universe. "What is man? Is he simply skin, flesh, bones, and veins? No! That which constitutes the real man is the soul, and those things which are called the skin, the flesh, the bones, and the veins, all these are merely a garment, they are simply the clothes of the man, but not the man himself. When man departs, he puts off these garments wherewith the son of man is clothed. Yet are all these bones and sinews formed in the secret of the highest wisdom, after the heavenly image. The skin represents the firmament, which extends everywhere, and covers everything like a garment—as it is written, 'Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.' (Ps. clv, 2) . . . The flesh represents the deteriorated part of the world; . . . the bones and the veins represent the heavenly chariot, the inner powers, the servants of God. . . . But these are the

<sup>14</sup> That the righteous are greater than the angels is already propounded in the Talmud (נוראים צדיקים יותר ממלאכי השעה) *Sanhedrin* 93 a); and it is asserted that no one angel can do two things (אחד שתי שליחויות) (*Bereshith Rabba*, section 1), for which reason three angels had to be sent, one to announce to Sarai the birth of Isaac, the other to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, and the third to save Lot and his family; whilst a man can perform several duties. The superiority of man over angels is also asserted in the New Testament. (1 Cor. vi, 3.)

outer garments, for in the inward part is the deep mystery of the heavenly man. Everything here below, as above, is mysterious. Therefore it is written—'God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him' (Gen. i, 27); repeating the word God twice, one for the man and the other for the woman. The mystery of the earthly man is after the mystery of the Heavenly Man. And just as we see in the firmament above, covering all things, different signs which are formed of the stars and planets, and which contain secret things and profound mysteries, studied by those who are wise and expert in these signs; so there are in the skin, which is the cover of the body of the son of man, and which is like the sky that covers all things, signs and features which are the stars and planets of the skin, indicating secret things and profound mysteries, whereby the wise are attracted, who understand to read the mysteries in the human face." (*Sohar*, ii, 76 a.) He is still the presence of God upon earth (שכינתא תתא), and the very form of the body depicts the Tetragrammaton, the most sacred name Jehovah (יהוה). Thus the head is the form of the  $\text{ד}$ , the arms and the shoulders are like the  $\text{ה}$ , the breast represents the form of the  $\text{ו}$ , whilst the two legs with the back represent the form of the second  $\text{ה}$ . (*Sohar*, ii, 42 a.)<sup>15</sup>

The souls of all these epitomes of the universe are pre-existent in the World of Emanations,<sup>16</sup> and are without exception

15 The Karmarthi, who interpreted the precepts of Islamism allegorically, also maintained that the human body represents the letters in the name of God. When standing the human body represents an *Elif*, when kneeling a *Lam*, and when prostrated on the ground a *Hé*, so that the body is like a book in which may be read the name ALLAH. De Sacy, *Introduction à l'Exposé de la Religion des Druzes*, pp. 86, 87. Comp. Frank, *Die Kabbala*, p. 32.

16 The pre-existence of the human souls in the celestial regions was believed by the Jews before the Kabbalah came into vogue. We find this doctrine in the Book of Wisdom (viii, 20); in Josephus, where we are told that the Essenes believed 'that souls were immortal, and that they descended from the pure air, συμπλεκεσθαι ὡς περ εἰρκταῖς τοῖς σώμασι, to be chained to bodies' (*de Bell. Jud.* ii, 12); by Philo, who says 'the air was full of them, and that those which were nearest the earth κατὰσιν ἐκδιθησόμεναι σώμασι θνητοῖς, descending to be tied to mortal bodies, παλινδρομοῦσι αὐθις, return back to bodies, being

destined to inhabit human bodies, and pursue their course upon earth for a certain number of years. Hence we are told that, "When the Holy One, blessed be his name, wished to create the world, the universe was before him in idea. He then formed all the souls which are destined for the whole human race. All were minutely before him in the same form which they were to assume in the human body. He looked at each one of them; and there were some among them which would corrupt their way upon the earth." (*Sohar*, i, 96 b). Like the *Sephiroth* from which it emanates, every soul has ten potencies, which are subdivided into a trinity of triads, and are respectively represented by (I) *The Spirit*, (נשמה), which is the highest degree of being, and which both corresponds to and is operated upon by THE CROWN (כתר), representing the highest triad in the *Sephiroth*, called the Intellectual World; (II) *The Soul* (רוח), which is the seat of good and evil, as well as the moral qualities, and which both corresponds to and is operated upon by BEAUTY (תפארת), representing the second triad in the *Sephiroth*, called the Moral World; and (III) *The Cruder Spirit* (נפש), which is immediately connected with the body, is the direct cause of its lower functions, instincts, and animal life, and which both corresponds to and is operated upon by FOUNDATION (יסוד), representing the third triad in the *Sephiroth*, called the Material World.

In its original state each soul is androgynous, and is separated into male and female when it descends on earth to be borne in a human body. We have seen that the souls of

desirous to live in them.' (*De Gignat*, p. 222, C.; *De Somniis*, p. 455, D. Comp. Arnald on the Book of Wisdom, viii, 20, and Whitby on John ix, 2., where these quotations and others are given); and in the Talmud where it is declared that the human souls which are to be born (רוחות ונשמות שצריך להוראות), have their abode in the seventh heaven (*Chagiga*, 12 b); that they leave gradually the storehouse of souls to people this earth (על שכלו כל הנשמות שבנות) *Jebamoth*, 62; *Aboda Sara*, 5; *Nidda*, 13); and that the Holy One, blessed be he, took counsel with them when he was about to create the world (במשכן של צדיקין נבחר הקב"ה וברא את העולם (*Beresith Rabba*, section viii).

the righteous, in the world of spirits, are superior in dignity to the heavenly powers and the ministering angels. It might, therefore, be asked why do these souls leave such an abode of bliss, and come into this vale of tears to dwell in tabernacles of clay? The only reply to be given is that these happy souls have no choice in the matter. Indeed we are told that the soul, before assuming a human body, addresses God—"Lord of the Universe! I am happy in this world, and do not wish to go into another world, where I shall be a bond-maid, and be exposed to all kinds of pollutions." (*Sohar*, ii, 96.)<sup>17</sup> And can you wonder at this pitiful ejaculation? Should your philanthropic feelings and your convictions that our heavenly Father ordains all things for the good of his children, impel you to ask that an explanation of this mystery might graciously be vouchsafed to you in order to temper your compassion and calm your faith, then take this parable. "A son was born to a King; he sends him to the country, there to be nursed and brought up till he is grown up, and instructed in the ceremonies and usages of the royal palace. When the King hears that the education of his son is finished, what does his fatherly love impel him to do? For his son's sake he sends for the Queen his mother, conducts him into the palace and makes merry with him all day. Thus the Holy One, blessed be he, has a son with the Queen: this is the heavenly and sacred soul. He sends him into the country, that is into this world, therein to grow up and to learn the customs of the court. When the King hears that this his son has grown up in the country, and that it is time to bring him into the palace, what does his love for his son impel him to do? He sends, for his sake,

<sup>17</sup> The notion about the reluctance of the soul to enter into this world is also not peculiar to the Kabbalah. The most ancient tract of the Mishna thus speaks of the soul: "Against thy will thou comest an embryo, and against thy will thou art born" (*Aboth*, iv. 29); on which Bartenora, in his commentary, remarks: "The soul does not wish to quit the pure abode of the curtain which encloses the Holy of Holies."

for the Queen and conducts him to the palace." (*Sohar*, i, 245 b.)

As has already been remarked, the human soul, before it descends into the world, is androgynous, or in other words, consists of two component parts, each of which comprises all the elements of our spiritual nature. Thus the *Sohar* tells us—"Each soul and spirit, prior to its entering into this world, consists of a male and female united into one being. When it descends on this earth the two parts separate and animate two different bodies. At the time of marriage, the Holy One, blessed be he, who knows all souls and spirits, unites them again as they were before, and they again constitute one body and one soul, forming as it were the right and left of one individual; therefore 'There is nothing new under the sun.' (Ecl. i, 9.) . . . This union, however, is influenced by the deeds of the man and by the ways in which he walks. If the man is pure and his conduct is pleasing in the sight of God, he is united with that female part of his soul which was his component part prior to his birth." (*Sohar*, i, 91 b.)<sup>18</sup> The soul carries her knowledge with her to the earth, so that "every thing which she learns here below she knew already, before she entered into this world." (*Ibid.*, iii, 61 b.)

Since the form of the body as well as the soul, is made after the image of the Heavenly Man, a figure of the forthcoming body which is to clothe the newly descending soul, is sent down from the celestial regions, to hover over the couch of the husband and wife when they copulate, in order that the conception may be formed according to this model. "At

18 כל אינון רחוק ונשמחין בלוח כליק דבר ונוקבא דמחברין כחא ואחמסין בידא דהחא מסנא שלחא דאחמסין על שדאחין [עבורהין] דבני נשא וליה שמיא ובשעתא דנחחין ואחמסין בדיו מחשפין לחמין דא אקדים מן דא ואחיה ליה בבני נשא ובר משה [מחא] עין רוותא דלחין קב"ה דירע אינון רחוק ונשמחין מחבר לון כדקמיהא ומכחא עליהו ובר אחמסין אחמסין דירע נוסא דיר נשמחא ימינא ושמאלא דקא דיר ובנין כך אין כל חדש חתח השמש ו' ואי חמסא דא חנין לית ווונא אלא לטוס עובדי ואחמסין דבר נש הכי חמא דא' דא' ובר עובדי אחמסין ובר ליהא דליה לאחמסין ביה כמה דנסי' ודיר חלק א דף צא ב

connubial intercourse on earth, the Holy One, blessed be he, sends a human form which bears the impress of the divine stamp. This form is present at intercourse, and if we were permitted to see it we should perceive over our heads an image resembling a human face; and it is in this image that we are formed. As long as this image is not sent by God and does not descend and hover over our heads, there can be no conception, for it is written—'And God created man in his own image.' (Gen. i, 27.) This image receives us when we enter the world, it develops itself with us when we grow, and accompanies us when we depart this life; as it is written—'Surely, man walked in an image' (Ps. xxxvii, 5): and this image is from heaven. When the souls are to leave their heavenly abode, each soul separately appears before the Holy King, dressed in a sublime form, with the features in which it is to appear in this world. It is from this sublime form that the image proceeds. It is the third after the soul, and precedes it on the earth; it is present at the conception, and there is no conception in the world where this image is not present." (*Sohar*, iii, 104 a b.)<sup>19</sup>

All human countenances are divisible into the four primordial types of faces, which appeared at the mysterious chariot throne in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, viz., the face of man, of the lion, the ox and the eagle. Our faces resemble these more or less according to the rank which our souls occupy in the intellectual or moral dominion. "And physiognomy does not consist in the external lineaments, but in the features which are mysteriously drawn in us. The features

19 בספרא דשלמה סלמא אשכנחא דנשעתא דוונא אשכנחא לרומא סדר קביא דוד דיקנא כפרצוסא ד"נ רשימא דיקנא בצולמא וקיימא על ההוא ווונא ואלמלי אחידוב רשו לעינא למחיו חמי ב"נ על רשיה דוד צולמא רשימא כפרצוסא דבר נש ובהדא צולמא אטברי ב"נ ועד דקיימא [ס"א ועד לא קיימא] ההוא צולמא דשוד ליה מאריה על רשיה ושטבחא חסן לא אטברי ב"נ הוד' ריבא אלדים את הארס בצלמו . ההוא צלם אודמן לקבליה עד דנשק לעלמא כד נשק בהדא צלם אטרי בהדא צלם אודל הוד' אך בצלם יתהדך איש דחאי צלם אידו סלעלא בשעתא דאינון רוחין נשקין סאתריהו כל רוחא ורוחא אנתקן קמי סלמא קיימא בתקוני יקר כפרצוסא דקא' בהאי עלמא . וסדהא דיוקנא תקונא יקר נשק האי צלם . דא חליטאה לרומא ואקדיט בהאי עלמא בשעתא דוונא אשכנחא וליך ווונא בעלמא דלא אשכנחא בגווייהו . וחדר חלק ג דף ק א ב,



in the face change according to the form which is peculiar to the inward face of the spirit. It is the spirit which produces all those physiognomical peculiarities known to the wise; and it is only through the spirit that the features have any meaning. All those spirits and souls which proceed from Eden (*i.e.*, the highest wisdom) have a peculiar form, which is reflected in the face." (*Sohar*, ii, 73 b.) The face thus lighted up by the peculiar spirit inhabiting the body, is the mirror of the soul; and the formation of the head indicates the character and temper of the man. An arched forehead is a sign of a cheerful and profound spirit, as well as of a distinguished intellect; a broad but flat forehead indicates foolishness and silliness; whilst a forehead which is flat, compressed on the sides and spiral, betokens narrowness of mind and vanity. (Comp. *Sohar*, ii, 71 b, 75 a.)

As a necessary condition of free existence and of moral being, the souls are endowed by the Deity, from the very beginning, with the power of adhering in close proximity to the primordial source of infinite light from which they emanated, and of alienating themselves from that source and pursuing an independent and opposite course. Hence, Simon ben Jochai said, "If the Holy One, blessed be he, had not put within us both the good and the evil desire, which are denominated light and darkness, the created man would have neither virtue nor vice. For this reason it is written—'Behold, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.' (Deut. xxx, 15.) To this the disciples replied, Wherefore is all this? Would it not be better if reward and punishment had not existed at all, since in that case man would have been incapable of sinning and of doing evil. He rejoined, It was meet and right that he should be created as he was created, because the Law was created for him, wherein are written punishments for the

wicked and rewards for the righteous ; and there would not have been any reward for the righteous and punishment for the wicked but for created man." (*Sohar* i, 23 a.) So complete is their independence, that souls, even in their pre-existent state, can and do choose which way they intend to pursue. " All souls which are not guiltless in this world, have already alienated themselves in heaven from the Holy One, blessed be he ; they have thrown themselves into an abyss at their very existence, and have anticipated the time when they are to descend on earth. . . . Thus were the souls before they came into this world." (*Ibid.*, iii, 61 b.)

#### IV. *The Destiny of Man and the Universe.*

As the *En Soph* constituted man the microcosm, and as the Deity is reflected in this epitome of the universe more than in any component part of the creation, all things visible and invisible are designed to aid him in passing through his probationary state here below, in gathering that experience for which his soul has been sent down, and in returning in a pure state to that source of light from which his soul emanated. This destiny of man—*i.e.*, the reunion with the Deity from which he emanated—is the constant desire both of God and man, and is an essential principle of the soul, underlying its very essence. Discarding that blind power from our nature, which governs our animal life, which never quits this earth, and which therefore plays no part in our spiritual being, the soul possesses two kinds of powers and two sorts of feelings. It has the faculty for that extraordinary prophetic knowledge, which was vouchsafed to Moses in an exceptional manner, called *the Luminous Mirror* (אספקלריא נהרא = *specularia*), and the ordinary knowledge termed *the Non-Luminous Mirror* (אספקלריא דלא נהרא), respectively represented in the earthly Paradise by the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil ; and it possesses

the higher feeling of love and the lower feeling of fear.<sup>20</sup> Now the full fruition of that higher knowledge and of that loftier feeling of love can only be reaped when the soul returns to the Infinite Source of Light, and is wrapped in that luminous garment which the protoplasts forfeited through the fall. Thus we are told, "Come and see when the soul reaches that place which is called the Treasury of Life (צִוְרוֹא דְחַיִּי), she enjoys a bright and luminous mirror (אֶסְפֵּקְלָרִיאָה דְנֹהָרָא), which receives its light from the highest heaven. The soul could not bear this light but for the luminous mantle which she puts on. For just as the soul, when sent to this earth, puts on an earthly garment to preserve herself here, so she receives above a shining garment, in order to be able to look without injury into the mirror whose light proceeds from the Lord of Light. Moses too could not approach to look into that higher light which he saw, without putting on such an ethereal garment; as it is written—'And Moses went into the midst of the cloud' (Exod. xxiv, 18), which is to be translated *by means* of the cloud wherewith he wrapped himself as if dressed in a garment. At that time Moses almost discarded the whole of his earthly nature; as it is written,—'And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights' (*ibid.*); and he thus approached that dark cloud where God is enthroned. In this wise the departed spirits of the righteous dress themselves in the upper regions in luminous garments, to be able to endure that light which streams from the Lord of Light." (*Sohar*, i, 65 b, 66 a.)

The two feelings of love and fear are designed to aid the soul in achieving her high destiny, when she shall no more

<sup>20</sup> The two kinds of faculties, as well as the two sorts of feelings, are also mentioned in the Talmud. Thus it is said—"All the prophets looked into the Non-Luminous Mirror, whilst our teacher, Moses, looked into the Luminous Mirror." (כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים נִסְתַּחֲלוּ בְּאֶסְפֵּקְלָרִיאָה שְׁמַיָּה כְּשֶׁהוּא רַבֵּנוּ נִסְתַּחֲלָה בְּאֶסְפֵּקְלָרִיאָה הַמַּאֲרִיחָה *Jebamoth*, 49 b). And again—"Also the divine service which is engendered by fear and not by love, has its merit." (*Jerusalem Berachoth*, 44; *Babylon Bera*, 22 a.)

look through the dark glass, but see face to face in the presence of the Luminous Mirror, by permeating all acts of obedience and divine worship. And though perfect love, which is serving God purely out of love, like that higher knowledge, is to be man's destiny in heaven, yet the soul may attain some of it on earth, and endeavour to serve God out of love and not from fear, as thereby she will have an antepast on earth of its union with the Deity, which is to be so rapturous and indissoluble in heaven. "Yet is the service which arises from fear not to be depreciated, for fear leads to love. It is true that he who obeys God out of love has attained to the highest degree, and already belongs to the saints of the world to come, but it must not be supposed that to worship God out of fear is no worship. Such a service has also its merit, though in this case the union of the soul with the Deity is slight. There is only one degree which is higher than fear: it is love. In love is the mystery of the divine unity. It is love which unites the higher and lower degrees together; it elevates everything to that position where everything must be one. This is also the mystery of the words, 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.'" (*Sohar*, ii, 216 a.)

Hence it is that these two principles play so important a part in the devotions and contemplations of the Kabbalists. Love is made to correspond to MERCY, the fourth *Sephira*, whilst Fear is made to answer to RIGOUR, the fifth *Sephira*; and it is asserted that when these two principles are thoroughly combined by the righteous in their divine worship and acts of obedience, the name Jehovah, which comprises these two principles, and which is now rent in twain by the preponderance of sin and disobedience, will be re-united. Then, and then only, will all the souls return to the bosom of the Father of our spirits; then will the restitution of all things take place, and the earth shall be covered with the knowledge of God even as the waters cover the sea. This is the reason why the

Kabbalists utter the following prayer prior to the performance of any of the commandments : " For the re-union of the Holy One, blessed be his name, and his Shechinah, I do this in love and fear, in fear and love, for the union of the name יה with וה into a perfect harmony ! I pronounce this in the name of all Israel ! " <sup>21</sup> In order to represent this union to the senses the words *Fear* יראה and *Love* אהבה, are divided, and so placed above each other that they may be read either across or down, as follows :—

י	ר
א	ה
א	ה
ב	ה

When thus fulfilling the commandments the pious not only enjoy a prelibation of that sublime light which shines in heaven, and which will serve them as a garment when they enter into the other world and appear before the Holy One (*Sohar*, ii, 299 *b*), but become on earth already the habitation of the *Sephiroth*, and each saint has that *Sephira* incarnate in him which corresponds to the virtue he most cultivates, or to the feature most predominant in his character. Among the patriarchs, therefore, who were the most exalted in piety, we find that LOVE, the fourth *Sephira*, was incarnate in Abraham ; RIGOUR, the fifth *Sephira*, in Isaac ; MILDNESS, the sixth *Sephira*, in Jacob ; FIRMNESS, the seventh *Sephira*, in Moses ; SPLENDOUR, the eighth *Sephira*, in Aaron ; FOUNDATION, the ninth *Sephira*, in Joseph ; and KINGDOM, the tenth *Sephira*, was incarnate in David. Hence all the righteous who constitute the emanations, of the *ten Sephiroth* are divided into three classes corresponding to the three principles or Pillars exhibited in the Kabbalistic Tree, viz. :—I. THE PILLAR OF MERCY (חסד), represented by the

21 לשם יחוד קב"ה ושכינתה ברחמי ודחלו ובדחלו ורחמי ליחוד שם י"ה ברו"ה ביחודא שלים בשם כל ישראל



Patriarch Abraham (comp. **חסד לאברהם** Micah, vii, 20;) II. THE PILLAR OF JUSTICE (**פחד**), represented by Isaac (comp. **פחד יצחק** Gen. xxxi, 42); and III. THE MIDDLE PILLAR, represented by Jacob (comp. **אמת ליעקב** Micah vii, 20), which is the connecting or uniting principle. (*Sohar*, i, 146 a; 148 b.) It is for this reason that the patriarchs are denominated the Chariot-throne of the Lord.

Following the paths of righteousness, the saints on earth enjoy the protection of heaven in an especial manner, by virtue of the divine wisdom inherent in them, for they are able to decipher the signs which God has put in the firmament to shield them from accidents. "In heaven above, that surrounds the universe, are signs in which the deepest mysteries are concealed. These signs are constellations and stars, which are studied and deciphered by the wise." (*Sohar*, ii, 76 a.) Hence the admonition—"He who has to start on a journey very early, should rise at daybreak, look carefully towards the east, and he will perceive certain signs resembling letters which pierce through the sky and appear above the horizon. These shining forms are those of the letters wherewith God created heaven and earth. Now, if man knows the secret meaning of the sacred name, consisting of forty-two letters, and meditates on it with becoming devotion and enthusiasm, he will perceive six *Jods* (**יוד"ו**) in the pure sky, three to the right and three to the left, as well as three *Vavs* (**ו"ו**), which hover about in the heavenly arch. These are the letters of the priestly benediction (**ברכת כהנים**). . . . In the bright morning he will perceive a pillar towards the west, hanging perpendicularly over the earthly paradise, and another pillar hanging over the centre of paradise. This luminous pillar has the three colours of a purple web: three birds stand on it, singing in the following manner. The first sings, 'Hallelujah! Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord' (Ps. cxiii, 1); the second, 'Blessed be the name

of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore' (*ibid.* v. 2); and the third, 'From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised' (*ibid.* v. 3). This is the time when the pious traveller is to offer up his morning prayer, in order that he may secure heaven's blessings and the sublime and divine mercy as his sure guide." (*Sohar*, ii, 130 b.)

Now since it is an absolute condition of the soul to return to the Infinite Source from which it emanated, after developing all those perfections, the germs of which are eternally implanted in it; and since some souls do not at once develop these fruits of righteousness, which precludes their immediate reunion with their Primordial Source, another term of life is vouchsafed to them, so that they may be able to cultivate those virtues which they stifled in their former bodily life, and without which it is impossible for them to return to their heavenly home. Hence, if the soul, in its first assuming a human body and sojourn on earth, fails to acquire that experience for which it descends from heaven, and becomes contaminated by that which is polluting, it must re-inhabit a body again and again till it is able to ascend in a purified state through repeated trials. Thus we are told that<sup>22</sup> "All souls are subject to transmigration (עאין בגלגולא), and men do not know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be he; they do not know that they are brought before the tribunal, both before they enter into this world and after they quit it, they are ignorant of the many transmigrations and secret probations which they have to undergo, and of the number of souls and spirits which enter into this world, and do not return to the palace of the Heavenly King. Men do not know how the

22 כל נשמתין שאין בגלגולא ולא ידעין בני נשא אורחיו וקדושתא בריך הוא ודין קיימא פיקלא ודין אחרנו בני נשא בכל יומא ובכל ערין ודין נשמתין שאין ברינא עד לא יתין להאי עלמא ודין שאין ברינא לבתר דנשקף מהאי עלמא כמה גלגולין וכמה עובדין סתמין עבדין קדושתא בריך הוא בהדי כמה נשמתין שפילאין וכמה רוחין שפילאין אולין בזהווא עלמא ולא שאין לסרנדהא דמלמא

souls revolve like a stone which is thrown from a sling ; as it is written—' And the souls of thine enemies them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling.' (1 Sam., xxv, 29.) But the time is at hand when these mysteries will be disclosed." (*Sohar*, ii, 99 b.)

The transmigration of the soul into another body, however, is restricted to three times ; and if two souls in their third residence in human bodies are still too weak to resist all earthly trammels and to acquire the necessary experience, they are both united and sent into one body, so that they may be able conjointly to learn that which they were too feeble to do separately. It sometimes, however, happens that it is the singleness and isolation of the soul which is the source of her weakness, and she requires help to pass through her probation. In that case she chooses for a companion a soul which has more strength and better fortune. The stronger of the two then becomes as it were the mother ; she carries the sickly one in her bosom, and nurses her from her own substance, just as a woman nurses her child. Such an association is therefore called pregnancy (**עיבור**), because the stronger soul gives as it were life and substance to the weaker companion.<sup>23</sup>

וכמה עלמין אההסך בהו ויעלמא דאההסך בכמה סליאן סתימין ובני נשא לא ידעין לא שסגהון חזק מחגלגלן נשמתין כאנאן בקוססחא כמה דאח אחד נאש אויבך קילענה בתוך כך הקלע השחא איה לנלאה דהא כלי ודורו הלק ב' דף צב ב'

23 According to Josephus, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls into other bodies (*μετεμψύχωσις*), was also held by the Pharisees (comp. *Antiq.* xviii, 1, 3; de Bell. Jud. ii, 8, 14). restricting, however, the metempsychosis to the righteous. And though the Midrashim and the Talmud are silent about it, yet from Saadin's vituperations against it (**אבל אויבר שמצאתי אנשים ממי שנקראים יהודים**) אמרים בהשנות וקוראים אוורו הדעהקה *Emunoth ve-Deoth*, vi, 7; viii, 3) there is no doubt that this doctrine was held among some Jews in the ninth century of the present era. At all events it is perfectly certain that the Karaite Jews firmly believed in it ever since the seventh century. (Comp. Frankel, *Monatschrift*, x, 177, &c.) St. Jerome assures us that it was also propounded among the early Christians as an esoteric and traditional doctrine which was entrusted to the select few, (*abscondite quasi in foveis riperarum versari et quasi hereditario malo serpere in paucis*. Comp. epist. ad Demetriadem); and Origen was convinced that it was only by means of this doctrine that certain Scriptural narratives, such as the struggle of Jacob with Esau before their birth, the reference about Jeremiah when still in his mother's womb, and many others, can possibly be explained. (*περι ἀρχῶν* i, 1, cap. vii; *Adver. Celsum*, i, 3.



As the world, like all other living beings, is a further expansion of the Deity's own substance, it too must ultimately share that blessedness which it enjoyed in its first evolution. This is indicated in the letter ב with which the history of the creation begins (*i.e.* ב"ראשית), and which is also the first letter in the word *blessing* (ב"רכה).<sup>24</sup> Even the archangel of wickedness, or the *venomous beast* (חוייא בישא), or Samäel (סמאל), as he is called, will be restored to his angelic nature and name, inasmuch as he too, like all other beings, proceeded from the same infinite source of all things. The first part of his name (סם), which signifies *venom*, will then be dropped, and he will retain the second part (אל), which is the common name of all the angels. This, however, will only take place at the advent of Messiah. But his coming is retarded by the very few new souls which enter into the world; as many of the old souls which have already inhabited bodies have to re-enter those bodies which are now born, in consequence of having polluted themselves in their previous bodily existence, and the soul of the Messiah, which, like other souls, has its pre-existence in the world of the *Sephiroth*, cannot be born till all human souls have passed through their period of probation on this earth, because it is to be the last born one at the end of days. Then the great Jubilee year will commence, when the whole pleroma of souls (אוצר הנשמות), cleaned and purified shall return into the bosom of the Infinite Source; and they shall be in "the Palace which is situate in the secret and most elevated part of heaven, and which is called the *Palace of Love* (היכל אהבה). There the profoundest mysteries are; there dwells the Heavenly King, blessed be he, with the holy souls, and is united with them by a loving kiss.

<sup>24</sup> The notion that the creation is a blessing, and that this is indicated in the first letter, is already propounded in the Midrash, as may be seen from the following remark. The reason why the Law begins with *Beth*, the second letter of the Alphabet, and not with *Aleph*, the first letter, is that the form *r* is the first letter in the word *blessing*, while the latter is the first letter in the word *accursed*, למה בריח מפני שהוא לשון ברכה ולא בא"ל שהוא לשון ארירה (*Midrash Rabba*, sec. i).

(*Sohar*, ii, 97 a.) "This kiss is the union of the soul with the substance from which it emanated." (*Ibid.*, i, 168 a.) Then hell shall disappear; there shall be no more punishment, nor temptation, nor sin: life will be an everlasting feast, a Sabbath without end. Then all souls will be united with the Highest Soul, and supplement each other in the Holy of Holies of the Seven Halls (שבע היכלות). Everything will then return to unity and perfection—everything will be united into one idea, which shall be over, and fill the whole universe. The basis of this idea, however (*i.e.*, the light which is concealed in it), will never be fathomed or comprehended; only the idea itself which emanates from it shall be comprehended. In that state the creature will not be distinguished from the Creator, the same idea will illuminate both. Then the soul will rule the universe like God, and what she shall command he will execute. (*Sohar*, i, 45 a and b.)

*V. The Kabbalistic view of the Old Testament, and its relation to Christianity.*

We have already seen that the Kabbalah claims a pre-Adamite existence, and asserts that its mysteries are covertly conveyed in the first four books of the Pentateuch. Those of us who read the Books of Moses, and cannot discover in them any of the above-mentioned doctrines, will naturally ask for the principles of exegesis whereby these secrets are deduced from or rather introduced into the text. These principles are laid down in the following declaration:—"If the Law simply consisted of ordinary expressions and narratives, *e. gr.*, the words of Esau, Hagar, Laban, the ass of Balaam, or of Balaam himself, why should it be called the Law of truth, the perfect Law, the true witness of God? Each word contains a sublime source, each narrative points not only to the single instance in question, but also to generals." (*Sohar*, iii, 149 b.) "Woe be to the son of man who says that the *Tora* (Pentateuch) contains common sayings

and ordinary narratives.<sup>25</sup> For, if this were the case, we might in the present day compose a code of doctrines from profane writings which should excite greater respect. If the Law contains ordinary matter, then there are nobler sentiments in profane codes. Let us go and make a selection from them, and we shall be able to compile a far superior code.<sup>26</sup> But

25 This view that the mere literal narrative is unworthy of inspiration, and that it must contain a spiritual meaning concealed under the garment of the letter, is not peculiar to the Kabbalah. Both the Synagogue and the Church have maintained the same from time immemorial. Thus the Talmud already describes the impious Manasseh, King of Israel, as making himself merry over the narratives of the Pentateuch and ironically asking (מנשה בן דודקה סדדא ישרא) מנשה בן דודקה ברגרות של דודא אמר וכי לא היה לו למנשה לכתוב אלא אחת לזמן חמנו ורמנו דהוה (שלוש לאלוף ורך ראובן בימי קצד חשים רמנא דחזאים בשדא), whether Moses could not find anything better to relate than that "Lotan's sister was Timna" (Gen. xxxvi, 22); "Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz" (*ibid.*, v. 12); that "Reuben went in the days of the wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field" (*ibid.*, xxx, 14), &c., &c. And it is replied that these narratives contain another sense besides the literal one. (*Sanhedrim*, 99 b.) Hence the rule (חזקא לאבדא) כל כזה שאמר (למנוח) what happened to the fathers is typical of the children.

26 Origen's words are almost literally the same—"Si adsideamus litteras et secundum hoc vel quod Judaeis, vel quod vulgo videtur, accipiamus quas in lege scripta sunt, erubescere dicere et confiteri quia tales leges dederit Deus: videbuntur enim magis elegantes et rationabiles hominum leges, verbi gratia vel Romanorum vel Atheniensium, vel Lacedaemoniorum. *Homil. vii. in Levit.* Again, the same erudite father says, "What person in his senses will imagine that the first, second, and third day, in connection with which morning and evening are mentioned, were without sun, moon and stars, nay that there was no sky on the first day? Who is there so foolish and without common sense as to believe that God planted trees in the garden eastward of Eden like a husbandman, and planted therein the tree of life, perceptible to the eyes and senses, which gave life to the eater thereof; and another tree which gave to the eater thereof a knowledge of good and evil? I believe that everybody must regard these as figures, under which a recondite sense is concealed." *Lib. iv. cap. ii. περί ἀρχῶν.* Huet, *Origeniana*, p. 107. Comp. Davidson, *Sacred Hermeneutics*, Edinburgh, 1843, p. 90, &c. It must, however, not be supposed that this sort of interpretation, which defies all rules of sound exegesis and common sense, is confined to the ancient Jewish Rabbins or the Christian fathers. The Commentary on Genesis and Exodus by Chr. Wordsworth, D.D., Canon of Westminster, may fairly compete in this respect with any production of bygone days. Will it be believed that Dr. Wordsworth actually sees it "suggested by the Holy Spirit Himself," that Noah drunk, exposing his nakedness, and mocked by his own child, Ham, is typical of Christ who drank the cup of God's wrath, stripped Himself of His heavenly glory, and was mocked by his own children the Jews? But we must give the Canon's own words. "Noah drank the wine of his vineyard; Christ drank the cup of God's wrath, which was the fruit of the sin of the cultivators of the vineyard, which he had planted in the world. Noah was made naked to his shame; Christ consented for our sake to strip Himself of His heavenly glory, and took on him the form of a servant. (Phil. ii, 7.) He laid aside his garments, and washed his disciples' feet. (John, xiii, 4.) He hid not his face from shame and spitting. (Isa. 1, 6.) When he was on the Cross, they that passed by reviled Him. (Matt. xxvii, 39.) He was mocked by His

every word of the Law has a sublime sense and a heavenly mystery. . . . Now the spiritual angels had to put on an earthly garment when they descended to this earth ; and if they had not put on such a garment, they could neither have remained nor be understood on the earth. And just as it was with the angels so it is with the Law. When it descended on earth, the Law had to put on an earthly garment to be understood by us, and the narratives are its garment. There are some who think that this garment is the real Law, and not the spirit which it clothed, but these have no portion in the world to come ; and it is for this reason that David prayed, ' Open thou mine eyes that I may behold the wondrous things out of the Law.' (Ps. cxix, 18.) What is under the garment of the Law ? There is the garment which every one can see ; and there are foolish people who, when they see a well-dressed man, think of nothing more worthy than this beautiful garment, and take it for the body, whilst the worth of the body itself consists in the soul. The Law too has a body : this is the commandments, which are called the body of the Law. This body is clothed in garments, which are the ordinary narratives. The fools of this world look at nothing else but this garment, which consists of the narratives in the Law ; they do not know any more, and do not understand what is beneath this garment. But those who have more understanding do not look at the garment but at the body beneath it (*i.e.*, the moral) ; whilst the wisest, the servants of the Heavenly King, those who dwell at Mount Sinai, look at nothing else but the soul (*i.e.*, the secret doctrine), which is the root of all the real Law, and these are destined in the world to come to behold the *Soul of this Soul* (*i.e.*, the Deity), which breathes in the Law." (*Sohar*, iii, 152 a.)

own children, the Jews. He deigned to be exposed to insult for our sakes, in shame and nakedness on the Cross (Heb. xii, 2), in order that we might receive eternal glory from His shame, and be clothed through His weakness with garments of heavenly beauty." (*Commentary on Genesis and Exodus*, London, 1864, p. 52.)

The opinion that the mysteries of the Kabbalah are to be found in the garment of the Pentateuch is still more systematically propounded in the following parable. "Like a beautiful woman, concealed in the interior of her palace, who when her friend and beloved passes by, opens for a moment a secret window and is seen by him alone, and then withdraws herself immediately and disappears for a long time, so the doctrine only shows herself to the chosen (*i.e.*, to him who is devoted to her with body and soul); and even to him not always in the same manner. At first she simply beckons at the passer-by with her hand, and it generally depends upon his understanding this gentle hint. This is the interpretation known by the name **רמז**. Afterwards she approaches him a little closer, lisps him a few words, but her form is still covered with a thick veil, which his looks cannot penetrate. This is the so called **שורש**. She then converses with him with her face covered by a thin veil; this is the enigmatic language of the **הסוד**. After having thus become accustomed to her society, she at last shews herself face to face and entrusts him with the innermost secrets of her heart. This is the secret of the Law, **סוד**.<sup>27</sup> He who is thus far initiated in the mysteries

<sup>27</sup> The notion that the Bible is to be explained in this fourfold manner was also propounded by the Jewish doctors generally, long before the existence of the Kabbalah (Comp. Ginsburg. *Historical and Critical Commentary on Ecclesiastes*. Longman, 1881, p. 30), and has been adopted by some of the fathers and schoolmen. Origen, although only advocating a threefold sense, viz.:—**σωματικός, ψυχικός, πνευματικός**, to correspond to the Platonic notion of the component parts of man, viz.:—**σῶμα, ψυχή, πνεῦμα**, almost uses the same words as the Kabbalah. "The sentiments of Holy Scriptures must be imprinted upon each one's soul in a threefold manner, that the more simple may be built up by the *flesh* (or body) of Scripture, so to speak, by which we mean the obvious explanation; that he who has advanced to a higher state may be edified by the *soul* of Scripture as it were; but he that is perfect, and like to the individuals spoken of by the Apostle (1 Cor. ii, 6, 7), must be edified by the spiritual law, having a shadow of good things to come. *περί ἀρχῶν*, lib. iv, cap. ii. Comp. Davidson, *Sacred Hermeneutics*, p. 97. Whilst Nicholas de Lyra, the celebrated commentator and forerunner of the Reformation (born about 1270, died October 23, 1340), distinctly espouses the Jewish four modes of interpretation, which he describes in the following couplet—

"Littera gesta docet, quid credas Allegoria,  
Moralis quid agas: quo tendas anagogia."

Comp. Alexander's edition of Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. **LYRA**.

of the *Tora* will understand that all those profound secrets are based upon the simply literal sense, and are in harmony with it; and from this literal sense not a single iota is to be taken and nothing to be added to it." (*Sohar* ii, 99.)

This fourfold sense is gradually disclosed to the initiated in the mysteries of the Kabbalah by the application of definite hermeneutical rules, which chiefly affect the letters composing the words. The most prominent of these canons are—

I. Every letter of a word is reduced to its numerical value, and the word is explained by another of the same quantity. Thus from the words "*Lo! three men stood by him*" (Gen. xviii, 2), it is deduced that these three angels were *Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael*, because וְהֵנָּה שְׁלֹשָׁה and *lo! three men*, and אֱלֹהֵי מִיכָאֵל גַּבְרִיאֵל וְרַפָּאֵל *these are Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael*, are of the same numerical value, as will be seen from the following reduction to their numerical value of both these phrases.

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \text{ו} & \text{ה} & \text{נ} & \text{ה} & \text{ש} & \text{ל} & \text{ש} \\
 6 & 5 & 50 & 5 & 300 & 300 & 5 \\
 \hline
 & & & & & & 701
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \text{א} & \text{ל} & \text{ו} & \text{מ} & \text{י} & \text{כ} & \text{א} \\
 1 & 30 & 6 & 40 & 10 & 20 & 1 \\
 \hline
 & & & & & & 701
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \text{ב} & \text{ר} & \text{י} & \text{א} & \text{ל} & & \\
 2 & 200 & 10 & 1 & 30 & & \\
 \hline
 & & & & & & 701
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \text{ו} & \text{ר} & \text{פ} & \text{א} & \text{ל} & & \\
 6 & 200 & 80 & 1 & 30 & & \\
 \hline
 & & & & & & 701
 \end{array}$$

This rule is called גִּמְטְרִיָּא = גִּמְטְרִיָּא which is a metathesis of the Greek word γράμμα, γραμματα, or γραμματεία, in the sense of numbers as represented by letters.

2. Every letter of a word is taken as an initial or abbreviation of a word. Thus every letter of the word בְּרֵאשִׁית, the first word in Genesis, is made the initial of a word, and we obtain בְּרֵאשִׁית רָאָה אֱלֹהִים שִׁקְלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל תּוֹרָה *in the beginning God saw that Israel would accept the Law*. This rule is

denominated נוטריון = *notaricum*, from *notarius*, a short-hand writer, one who among the Romans belonged to that class of writers who abbreviated and used single letters to signify whole words.

3. The initial and final letters of several words are respectively formed into separate words. Thus from the beginnings and ends of the words מִי יֵלֵךְ לַנְּהַשְׁמִיטָה *who shall go up for us to heaven?* (Deut. xxx, 12) are obtained מִלָּה *circumcision* and יְהוָה *Jehovah*, and inferred that God ordained circumcision as the way to heaven.

4. Two words occurring in the same verse are joined together and made into one. Thus מִי *who* and אֵלֶּה *these* are made into אֱלֹהִים *God* by transposing the ו and מ. *Vide supra*, p. 94.<sup>28</sup>

5. The words of those verses which are regarded as containing a peculiar recondite meaning are ranged in squares in such a manner as to be read either vertically or boustrophedonally, beginning at the right or left hand. Again the words of several verses are placed over each other, and the letters which stand under each other are formed into new words. This is especially seen in the treatment of three verses in Exod. xiv, (viz., 19-21), which are believed to

28 The above-mentioned exegetical canons, however, are not peculiar to the Kabbalah. They have been in vogue among the Jews from time immemorial. Thus the difficult passage in Isa. xxi, 8, וַיִּקְרָא אִירָה which is rendered in the Authorised Version, *and he cried, A lion!* or 'as a lion,' as the margin has it, is explained by the ancient Jewish tradition as a prophecy respecting Habakkuk, who, as Isaiah foresaw, would in coming days use the very words here predicted. (Comp. Isa. xxi, 8, 9, with Hab. ii, 1); and this interpretation is obtained by rule i; inasmuch as אִירָה *lion* and חֲבַקּוּק *Habakkuk* are numerically the same, viz. :—

ה	י	ר	א	and	ק	ו	ק	ב	ח				
5	10	200	1	=	216	and	100	0	100	2	8	=	216

(See the Commentaries of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Kimchi on Isa. xxi, 8.) Again, in the fact that Jacob made Joseph 'a coat of many colours' (Gen. xxxvii, 3), as the Authorised Version has it, or 'pieces,' as it is in the margin, the Midrash or the ancient Jewish exposition, sees the sufferings of Joseph indicated; inasmuch as כְּסִים according to rule ii, is composed of the initials of פוֹטִיפָר *Potiphar*, who imprisoned Joseph; סוֹחְרִים *merchants* סוֹחְרֵי אִשְׁמָעֵלִים *Ishmaelites* and מִדְיָנִים *Midianites*, who bought him and sold him again as a slave. (Gen. xxxvii, 25-28; xxxix, 1; comp. Rashi on Gen. xxxvii, 3.) For more extensive information on this subject, we must refer to Ginsburg's *Historical and Critical Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, Longman, 1861, p. 30, &c.

contain the three Pillars of the *Sephiroth*, and the Divine Name of seventy-two words. The following tables will illustrate this principle of interpretation. The first of these three verses ויסע מלאך האלהים ההלך לפני מחנה ישראל וילך מאחריהם ויסע עמוד הענן מפניהם ויעמוד מאחריהם, *and the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them* (Exod. xiv, 19), is read boustrophedonally, as follows:—

## I.

ו	א	ל	ש	א	ע	ס	ס
י	ל	ס	ר	ח	ע	ס	ד
ס	ח	נ	א	ר	ס	נ	ס
ע	י	י	ל	י	ו	י	א
ס	ס	ס	ו	ח	ד	ח	ח
ל	ח	ח	י	ס	ח	ס	ר
א	ח	נ	ל	ו	ע	ו	י
ך	ל	ח	ך	י	נ	י	ח
ח	ך	י	ס	ס	ן	ע	ס

ויבא בן מחנה מצרים ובין מחנה ישראל והי הענן והחשך ויאר את הלילה ולא קרב זה אל מחנה ישראל; *and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but gave light by night to these, so that the one came not near the other all the night* (Exod. xiv, 20), is in the first place divided, and read from right to left, beginning at the top, as exhibited in the following diagram.



## II.

ח	ס	ן	י	ב	א	ב	י	ו
ב	ו	ס	י	ר	צ	ס	ח	נ
ר	ש	י	ח	נ	ח	ס	ן	י
נ	ע	ח	י	ח	י	ו	ל	א
א	י	ו	ך	ש	ח	ח	ו	ן
ו	ח	ל	י	ל	ח	ח	א	ר
ל	א	ח	ו	ב	ר	ק	א	ל
ח	ל	י	ל	ח	ל	כ	ח	ו

It is then divided in the following manner, and read from left to right, beginning at the bottom.

## III.

ח	כ	ל	ח	ל	י	ל	ח
ק	ר	ב	ו	ח	א	ל	ו
ח	ל	י	ל	ח	ו	ל	א
ש	ך	ו	י	א	ר	א	ח
י	ח	ע	נ	ן	ו	ח	ח
י	ש	ר	א	ל	ו	י	ח
ו	ב	י	ן	ס	ח	נ	ח
ח	נ	ח	ס	צ	ר	י	ס
ו	י	ב	א	ב	י	ן	ס

Whilst the third of these three verses **יִשׁ מֹשֶׁה אֶת יָדוֹ עַל הַיָּם וַיּוֹלֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קְדִים עֹזָה כָּל הַלַּיְלָה וַיִּשָּׁם אֶת הַיָּם לַחֲרֵבָה וַיִּבְקַע הַיָּם**, *and Moses stretched out his hand over the sea ; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided* (Exod. xiv. 21), is divided as follows, and read from the right, beginning at the bottom.

## IV.

ס	י	מ	ח	ו	ע	ק	ב	י
ו	ח	ב	ר	ח	ל	ס	י	ח
ח	א	ס	ש	י	ו	ח	ל	י
ל	ח	ל	כ	ח	ו	ע	ס	י
ד	ק	ח	ו	ר	ב	ס	י	ח
ח	א	ח	ו	ח	י	ך	ל	ו
י	ו	ס	י	ח	ל	ע	ו	ד
י	ח	א	ח	ש	מ	ט	י	ו

The three verses which have thus yielded the three Pillars of the *Sephiroth*, are then joined together in groups of three letters in the order in which they are read in diagrams ii, iii, and iv, and they then yield the seventy-two divine names which the Kabbalah assigns to the Deity,<sup>29</sup> as follows :—

<sup>29</sup> The limits of this Essay preclude the possibility of entering into a disquisition on the seventy-two Divine names. Those who wish to examine the subject more extensively we must refer to the Commentaries on the *Sohar* (Exod xiv. 19-21), mentioned in the third part of this Essay ; and to Bartolocci, *Bibliotheca Magna Rubbinica*, Pars iv, p. 230 *seq.*, where ample information is given on this and kindred subjects.

כוח	אבא	ללה	קושש	עלם	סיס	אלי	חזו
Adorandus.	Longanimis.	Annunciatus.	Quasiatus.	Salus.	Specs.	Auxiliator.	Exaltator.
דקס	חזי	סבה	נל	חזע	לאו	אלד	חזי
Advocatus.	Emis.	Sublevator.	Decantatus.	Opportunus.	Exultabundus.		Recordabilis.
חזו	סלה	י	נלך	פחל	לו	כלי	לאו
Expetendus.	Custos.	Dexter.	Fortis.	Errvens.	Exauditor.	Justitia.	Dominator.
נשר	לכב	אוס	ר	שחח	ייר	חאח	נחח
Rector.	Solus.	Adolescentia.	Sanator.	Festinus.	Salvator.	Invocandus.	Mirabilis.
י	רחע	חעם	אני	סנר	כוק	לחח	יחו
Propulsator.	Adivtor.	Refugium.	Facies.	Gloria.	Deprecatio.	Expectatio.	Cogitabundus.
סיה	עשל	ערי	סאל	ילה	וול	סין	חחח
Revelator.	Magnificus.	Operator.	Compatiens.	Doctor.	Matutinus.	Custos.	Liberator.
פוי	סבח	ניר	ננא	עסם	חחש	דני	חזו
Erector.	Aeternum.	Reguator.	Vernus.	Altissimus.	Letaabundus.	Clemens.	Maximus.
סחי	ענו	יחח	וסב	סער	חירח	ייל	נסם
Mercator.	Laudabilis.	Amabilia.	Benedictus.	Justus.	Oriens.	Animus.	Protector.
סוס	חיי	יבס	יחח	חבו	איע	סנק	דסם
Requies.	Malus.	Deus.	Premium.	Bonus.	Dator.	Assistens.	Deprecabilis.

6. The letters of words are changed by way of anagram and new words are obtained. This canon is called תמורה or חילוף אותיות, *permutation*, and the commutation is effected according to fixed rules. Thus the alphabet is bent exactly

in the middle, and one half is put over the other, and by changing alternately the first letter or the first two letters at the beginning of the second line, twenty-two commutations are produced *ex. gr.* :—

11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

[ א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ]  
[ ל ת ש ר ק צ פ ע ס נ מ ]

[ א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ] or  
[ ל ת ש ר ק צ פ ע ס נ מ ]

These anagrammic alphabets obtain their respective names from the first two specimen pairs of letter which indicate the interchange. Thus, for instance, the first is called *Albath* אל"ב from the first words, the second *Abgath* אב"ג, and so on. The following table exhibits the established rules of the alphabetical permutations.

אל	נח	דש	הר	וק	וצ	וז	חצ	כס	י	נכ	1. ALBATH.
אנ	נח	דש	הר	וק	וצ	וז	חצ	כס	י	נכ	2. ABGATH.
אנ	דח	הש	ור	וק	חצ	כס	י	נכ	לנ	בס	3. AGDATH.
אד	בג	דח	דש	ור	חצ	כס	י	נכ	לס	אנ	4. ADBAO.
אח	בר	וח	וש	חצ	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נג	5. AHBAD.
א	בה	נד	וח	חצ	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	6. AVDA.
אז	ני	נה	חצ	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	דס	7. AZBAV.
אח	בו	נו	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	8. ACHBAZ.
אח	בח	נו	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	9. ATBACH.
א	במ	נח	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	10. AIBAT.
אח	ני	נמ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	11. ACHBI.
אל	בכ	ני	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	12. ALBACH.
אח	בל	נכ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	13. AVBAL.
אנ	במ	נל	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	14. ANBAM.
אח	בנ	נמ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	15. ASBAN.
אח	בס	נג	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	16. AABAS.
אח	בצ	נמ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	17. AFDA.
אח	בס	נע	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	18. AZBAF.
אח	בצ	נמ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	19. ARBAZ.
אח	בק	נכ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	20. ARBAK.
אח	בר	נכ	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	21. ASHBAB.
אח	בש	נר	דח	כס	י	נכ	לס	מס	נכ	סצ	22. ATHBASH.

To this list is to be added—

23. ABOGAD.	אב	גד	הו	וח	כי	כל	מן	סז	סצ	קר	שת
24. ALBAM.	אל	בט	ננ	דט	הצ	וט	וצ	חז	כז	יש	כת

Besides these canons the Kabbalah also sees a recondite sense in the form of the letters, as well as in the ornaments which adorn them.

As to the relation of the Kabbalah to Christianity, it is maintained that this theosophy propounds the doctrine of the trinity and the sufferings of Messiah. How far this is true may be ascertained from the following passages.<sup>30</sup> "We have already remarked in several places that the daily liturgical declaration about the divine unity is that which is indicated in the Bible (Deut. vi, 43), where *Jehovah* occurs first, then *Elohenu*, and then again *Jehovah*, which three together constitute a unity, and for this reason he [*i.e.*, *Jehovah*] is in the said place called one (אחד). But there are three names, and how can they be one? And although we read one (אחד), are they really one? Now this is revealed by the vision of the Holy Ghost, and when the eyes are closed we get to know that the three are only one. This is also the mystery of the voice. The voice is only one, and yet it consists of three elements, fire [*i.e.*, warmth], air [*i.e.*, breath], and water [*i.e.*, humidity], yet are all these one in the mystery of the voice, and can only be one. Thus also *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, and *Jehovah* constitute one—three forms which are one. And this is indicated by the voice which man raises [*i.e.*, at prayer], thereby to comprehend spiritually the most perfect unity of the *En Soph* for the finite, since all the three [*i.e.*, *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*] are read with the same loud voice, which comprises in itself a trinity. And this is the daily confession of the divine unity which, as a mystery, is revealed by the Holy Ghost. This unity has been explained

80 יחזקאל דכל יומא איהו יחזקאל למנדע ולשואב רעוהא יחזקאל דא הא אספק בנסה דוכתי יחזקאל דכל יומא איהו יחזקאל דקרא דיו"ד קבאיה אלהינו דיו"ד הא כללו חד וע"ד אקרי אחד יחזקאל דא חלה שמהן אינון חד אינון חד ואף על גב דקרינן אחד חד אינון חד אלא בהוינונא דרזח קדשא מתדיע אינון בהויו דעינא סמיא למנדע דחלחא אלין אחד יחזקאל דא איהו חא דקול דאשחבס קול איהו חד ואיהו חלחא נונין, אשא ורזחא וסמיא וכללו חד ברזא דקול ולאו אינון אלא חד יחזקאל איהו אלהינו י"י אינון חד, חלחא נונין ואינון חד יחזקאל דא איהו קול דעביד בר נש ביחזקאל ולשואב רעוהיה ביחזקאל דכלא סאן סוף עד סופא דכלא בהאי קול דקא עביד בהני חלחא דאינון חד יחזקאל



mercy and mercy with justice. Quoth he [*i.e.*, the father], Come and see that it is so ; Jehovah indeed does signify mercy whenever it occurs, but when through sin mercy is changed into justice, then it is written Jehovah (יהוה), but read *Elohim* (אלהים). Now come and see the mystery of the word [*i.e.*, Jehovah]. There are three degrees, and each degree exists by itself [*i.e.*, in the Deity], although the three together constitute one, they are closely united into one and are inseparable from each other." (*Sohar*, iii, 65 a.)

We shall only give one more passage bearing on the subject of the Trinity.<sup>32</sup> "He who reads the word (אחד) *One* [*i.e.*, in the declaration of the divine unity שמע] must pronounce the *Aleph* (א) quickly, shorten its sound a little, and not pause at all by this letter, and he who obeys this, his life will be lengthened. Whereupon they [*i.e.*, the disciples] said to him [*i.e.*, to R. Ilai], he [*i.e.*, R. Simeon] has said, There are two, and one is connected with them, and they are three ; but in being three they are one. He said to them, those two names, Jehovah Jehovah, are in the declaration 'Hear O Israel' (Deut. vi, 4), and *Eloheinu* (אלהינו), between them, is united with them as the third, and this is the conclusion which is sealed with the impression of *Truth* (אמת). But when these three are combined into a unity, they are one in a single unity." (*Sohar*, iii, 262 a.) Indeed one Codex of the *Sohar* had the following remark on the words "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" (Isa. iv, 8) ; קדוש זה אב קדוש זה בן קדוש זה רוח הקדוש, *the first holy refers to the Holy Father ; the second to the Holy Son ; and the third to the Holy*

רחמי אית דינא אמר ליה תא דתי דחכי הוא דיר' בכל אתר רחמי ובשעתא דמחסי דייבא רחמי לדינא  
סין כתיב יהוה ורינן ליה אלהים, אבל תא דתי דא דמלה ב' דרינן אינן וכל דרינא דרינא בלחודדי  
ואע"ז דכלא דתי ומתקשרי בחד ולא כחפשי דא סן דא : וחדר הלק ב' דף כ"ה א'

32 סאן דאמר אחד מצפיד לחבטא אל'ן ולקצרא קריאה רילה ולא יעכב בדאי אור כלל. וסאן  
דעבד דא יתארבון דתי אמרו ליה תו אמר תרין אינן וחדא אשתתק בדר ואינן חלתא וכד הוה חלתא  
אינן דר' אמר לון אלן תרין שמחון דשמי ישראל דאינן יהוה יהוה אלהינו אשתתק בדר ואידו  
דחובא דגושטנקא אסת' וכד סתדבדן כחדא אינן חד ביהודא דא : וחדר הלק ב' דף קס"ב א'

*Ghost*.<sup>33</sup> This passage, however, is omitted from the present recensions of the *Sohar*. Some Jewish writers have felt these passages to be so favourable to the doctrine of the Trinity, that they insist upon their being interpolations into the *Sohar*, whilst others have tried to explain them as referring to the *Sephiroth*.<sup>34</sup>

As to the atonement of the Messiah for the sins of the people, this is not only propounded in the *Sohar*, but is given as the explanation of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.<sup>35</sup> "When the righteous are visited with sufferings and afflictions to atone for the sins of the world, it is that they might atone for all the sins of this generation. How is this proved? By all the members of the body. When all members suffer, one member is afflicted in order that all may recover. And which of them? The arm. The arm is beaten, the blood is taken from it, and then the recovery of all the members of the body is secured. So it is with the children of the world: they are members one of another. When the Holy One, blessed be he, wishes the recovery of the world, he afflicts one righteous from their midst, and for his sake all are healed. How is this shown? It is written—'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, . . . and with his stripes we are healed.' (Isa. liii, 5.) 'With his stripes,' i.e., healed, as by the wound of bleeding an arm, and with this wound we are healed, i.e., it was a healing to

33 Comp. Galatinus, *De Arcanis Cathol.* lib. ii, c. 3, p. 91; who says that some Codices of the Chaldee paraphrase in Isa. vi, 3, had also קדש אבא קדש ברמא קדש רוחא קדש the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Ghost; see also Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebraica* i, 1186; Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* vii, 249.

34 Comp. Joel, *Die Religionsphilosophie des Sohars*. Leipzig, 1849, p. 240 ff.

35 בשעתא דהספדן צדיקא במדעין אי במנחשין בגין לבשרא על עלמא דיו, כדן יתבשרן כל חובי דמי. מנל מכל שייסי גושא. בשעתא דכל שייסין בעקא ומרע סני שריא עליהו שייא דמי אצפדן לאלקא בגין דהספן כללו. וסנו דרעה. דרעה אלף ואסוק מניה דמי כדן דמי אסותא לכל שייסי גושא. איף חבי בני עלמא אינון שייסין דא עס דמי. בשעתא דבני קבא לסידב אסותא לעלמא אלף לוד צדיקא בינייהו במדעין ובמנחשין ובגנייה ידב אסותא לכלא מנל דחבי דמי מחולל מסעדינו מדוכא מעונותינו ונ' ובחברתו נשא לנו ובחברתו אקוהא דמיא מסאן דאקו דרעה, ובחברתו חברה נשא לנו אסותא דמי לנו לכל שייסין דמיא; ודמי דקל ג' דף ר"ח א'



each one of us as members of the body." (*Sohar*, iii, 218 a.) To the same effect is the following passage.<sup>36</sup> "Those souls which tarry in the nether garden of Eden hover about the world, and when they see suffering or patient martyrs and those who suffer for the unity of God, they return and mention it to the Messiah. When they tell the Messiah of the afflictions of Israel in exile, and that the sinners among them do not reflect in order to know their Lord, he raises his voice and weeps because of those sinners, as it is written, 'he is wounded for our transgressions.' (Isa. liii, 5.) Whereupon those souls return and take their place. In the garden of Eden there is one palace which is called the palace of the sick. The Messiah goes into this palace and invokes all the sufferings, pain, and afflictions of Israel to come upon him, and they all come upon him. Now if he did not remove them thus and take them upon himself, no man could endure the sufferings of Israel, due as punishment for transgressing the Law; as it is written—'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, &c. (Isa. liii, 4, with Rom. xii, 8, 4.) When the children of Israel were in the Holy Land they removed all those sufferings and afflictions from the world by their prayers and sacrifices, but now the Messiah removes them from the world." (*Sohar*, ii, 212 b.)

That these opinions favour, to a certain extent, the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement, though not in the orthodox sense, is not only admitted by many of the Jewish literati who are adverse to the Kabbalah, but by some of its

36 אמן נשמתן רבנא דעין לתת . . . מששמי ומסחכל באינן מאידען וסאבין ובני מרעין ואנן דסבלין על יחודא ומאידען ותאבין ואמרין ליה למשיחא בשעתא דאמרין ליה למשיחא צערא דישאל בגלותהון ואינן דייבא ד' בהון ולא מסחכלי למסדע למאידען' ארס קלא ובני על אינן חייבין דבהו דה"ד הוא מחלל מששמינו מדוכא מסנותינו' חייבין אינן נשמתן וקיסמן באחריהו' בנחא דעין איה היכלא דחא דאקרי היכלא דבני מרעין' בדין משיח שאל בזהו היכלא וקארי לכל כרעין וכל כאבין כל יסוריהון דישאל דייחין עליה וכלאו דתין עליה וחלמלא דאיהו אקל סעליהו דישאל ונביל עליה' לא הוי בר נש דיכל למסבל יסוריהון דישאל על שונשי דאידעא' דה"ד אמן חלינו הוא נשא ונ' . . . כד הוי ישראל בארשא קישא באינן סולחנין וקרבנין דהו עברי הו מסלקן כל אינן מרעין ויסורין סעלמא' השתא משיח מסלק לון כבני עולא: ודא דלק ב' קא ריב מ'

friends. Indeed, the very fact that so large a number of Kabbalists have from time to time embraced the Christian faith would of itself show that there must be some sort of affinity between the tenets of the respective systems. Some of these converts occupied the highest position in the Synagogue, both as pious Jews and literary men. We need only specify Paul Ricci, physician to the Emperor Maximilian I; Julius Conrad Otto, author of *The Unveiled Secrets* (גלל רזיא), consisting of extracts from the *Talmud* and the *Sohar*, to prove the validity of the Christian doctrine (Nürnberg, 1805); John Stephen Rittengal, grandson of the celebrated Don Isaac Abravanel, and translator of *The Book Jetzira*, or of *Creation* (ספר יצירה), into Latin (Amsterdam, 1642); and Jacob Frank, the great apostle of the Kabbalah in the eighteenth century, whose example in professing Christianity was followed by several thousands of his disciples.<sup>37</sup> The testimony of these distinguished Kabbalists, which they give in their elaborate works, about the affinity of some of the doctrines of this theosophy with those of Christianity, is by no means to be slighted; and this is fully corroborated by the celebrated Leo di Modena, who, as an orthodox Jew, went so far as to question whether God will ever forgive those who printed the Kabbalistic works.<sup>38</sup>

The use made by some well-meaning Christians of the above-named Kabbalistic canons of interpretation, in controversies with Jews, to prove that the doctrines of Christianity are concealed under the letter of the Old Testament, will now be deprecated by every one who has any regard for the laws of language. As a literary curiosity, however, we shall give one or two specimens. No less a person than the celebrated

<sup>37</sup> Comp. Peter Beer, *Geschichte der religiösen Secten der Juden*. Berlin, 1822-23, vol. ii, p. 309, &c.

<sup>38</sup> לאשר הדינים אותם הספרים "לא ידעו אם יסולח" Comp. אר נדום ed. Fürst, Leipzig, 1840, p. 7.

Reuchlin would have it that the doctrine of the Trinity is to be found in the first verse of Genesis. He submits, if the Hebrew word ברא, which is translated *created*, be examined, and if each of the three letters composing this word be taken as the initial of a separate word, we obtain the expressions בן רוח אב *Son, Spirit, Father*, according to Rule 2 (p. 131). Upon the same principle this erudite scholar deduces the first two persons in the Trinity from the words—"the stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner" (Ps. cxviii, 22), by dividing the three letters composing the word אבן *stone*, into אב בן *Father, Son* (Comp. *De Verbo mirifico*, Basel, 1494). In more recent times we find it maintained that the '*righteousness*' spoken of in Daniel ix, 24, means *the Anointed of Jehovah*, because the original phrase, צדק עלמים is by Gematria, = numerical value, (which is Rule 1, given above, p. 131), the same as משיח יהוה. So pleased is the author with this discovery, that he takes great care to remark—"It is a proof which I believe has hitherto escaped the notice of interpreters." Such proofs, however, of the Messiahship of Christ bring no honour to our religion; and in the present day argue badly both against him who adduces them and against him who is convinced by them.

## II.

WE now proceed to trace the date and origin of the Kabbalah. Taking the *ex parte* statement for what it is worth, viz., that this secret doctrine is of a pre-Adamite date, and that God himself propounded it to the angels in Paradise, we shall have to examine the age of the oldest documents which embody its tenets, and compare these doctrines with other systems, in order to ascertain the real date and origin of this theosophy. But before this is done, it will be necessary to summarize, as briefly as possible, those doctrines which are peculiar to the Kabbalah, or which it expounds and elaborates in an especial manner, and which constitute it a separate system within the precincts of Judaism. The doctrines are as follow :—

1. God is boundless in his nature. He has neither will, intention, desire, thought, language, nor action. He cannot be grasped and depicted; and, for this reason, is called *En Soph*, and as such he is in a certain sense not existent.

2. He is not the direct creator of the universe, since he could not will the creation; and since a creation proceeding directly from him would have to be as boundless and as perfect as he is himself.

3. He at first sent forth ten emanations, or *Sephiroth*, which are begotten, not made, and which are both infinite and finite.

4. From these *Sephiroth*, which are the Archetypal Man, the different worlds gradually and successively evolved. These evolutionary worlds are the brightness and the express image of their progenitors, the *Sephiroth*, which uphold all things.

5. These emanations, or *Sephiroth*, gave rise to or created in their own image all human souls. These souls are pre-existent, they occupy a special hall in the upper world of spirits, and there already decide whether they will pursue a good or bad course in their temporary sojourn in the human body, which is also fashioned according to the Archetypal image.

6. No one has seen the *En Soph* at any time. It is the *Sephiroth*, in whom the *En Soph* is incarnate, who have revealed themselves to us, and to whom the anthropomorphisms of Scripture and the *Hagada* refer. Thus when it is said, "God spake, descended upon earth, ascended into heaven, smelled the sweet smell of sacrifices, repented in his heart, was angry," &c., &c., or when the Hagadic works describe the body and the mansions of the Deity, &c., all this does not refer to the *En Soph*, but to these intermediate beings.

7. It is an absolute condition of the soul to return to the Infinite Source whence it emanated, after developing all those perfections the germs of which are indelibly inherent in it. If it fails to develop these germs, it must migrate into another body, and in case it is still too weak to acquire the virtues for which it is sent to this earth, it is united to another and a stronger soul, which, occupying the same human body with it, aids its weaker companion in obtaining the object for which it came down from the world of spirits.

8. When all the pre-existent souls shall have passed their probationary period here below, the restitution of all things will take place; Satan will be restored to an angel of light, hell will disappear, and all souls will return into the bosom of the Deity whence they emanated. The creature shall not then be distinguished from the Creator. Like God, the soul will rule the universe: she shall command, and God obey.

With these cardinal doctrines before us we shall now be

able to examine the validity of the Kabbalists' claims to the books which, according to them, propound their doctrines and determine the origin of this theosophy. Their works are I. *The Book of Creation*; II. *The Sohar*; and III. *The Commentary of the Ten Sephiroth*. As the *Book of Creation* is acknowledged by all parties to be the oldest, we shall examine it first.

### I. *The Book of Creation or Jetzira.*

This marvellous and famous document pretends to be a monologue of the patriarch Abraham, and premises that the contemplations it contains are those which led the father of the Hebrews to abandon the worship of the stars and to embrace the faith of the true God. Hence the remark of the celebrated philosopher, R. Jehudah Ha-Levi (born about 1086)—“The Book of the Creation, which belongs to our father Abraham, . . . demonstrates the existence of the Deity and the Divine Unity, by things which are on the one hand manifold and multifarious, whilst on the other hand they converge and harmonize; and this harmony can only proceed from One who originated it.”<sup>1</sup> (*Khozari*, iv. 25.) The whole Treatise consists of six *Perakim* (פרקים) or chapters, subdivided into thirty-three very brief *Mishnas* (משנות) or sections, as follows. The first chapter has twelve sections, the second has five, the third five, the fourth four, the fifth three, and the sixth four sections. The doctrines which it propounds are delivered in the style of aphorisms or theorems, and, pretending to be the dicta of Abraham, are laid down very dogmatically, in a manner becoming the authority of this patriarch.

As has already been intimated, the design of this treatise is to exhibit a system whereby the universe may be viewed methodically in connection with the truths given in the Bible,

1 ספר יצירה והוא לאברהם . . . חזרה על אלהותו ואחדותו בדברים מתחלשים מתרבים סדר  
אבל הם מתאחדים נסכמים כסד אורי והסכמתם סדר האחד אשר יכרים מהם: כחזי מאמר  
רבינו ב"ח

thus shewing, from the gradual and systematic development of the creation, and from the harmony which prevails in all its multitudinous component parts, that One God produced it all, and that He is over all. The order in which God gave rise to this creation out of nothing (יצר ממש מתוהו), and the harmony which pervades all the constituent parts of the universe are shown by the analogy which subsists between the visible things and the signs of thought, or the means whereby wisdom is expressed and perpetuated among men. Since the letters have no absolute value, nor can they be used as mere forms, but serve as the medium between essence and form, and like words, assume the relation of form to the real essence, and of essence to the embryo and unexpressed thought, great value is attached to these letters, and to the combinations and analogies of which they are capable. The patriarch Abraham, therefore, employs the double value of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet;<sup>2</sup> he uses them, both in their phonetic nature and in their sacred character, as expressing the divine truths of the Scriptures. But, since the Hebrew alphabet is also used as numerals, which are represented by the fundamental number *ten*, and since the vowels of the language are also *ten* in number, this decade is added to the twenty-two letters, and these two kinds of signs—i.e., the twenty-two letters of the alphabet and the ten fundamental numbers—are designated *the thirty-two ways of secret wisdom*; and the treatise opens with the declaration<sup>3</sup>—"By thirty-two paths of secret wisdom, the Eternal, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, the living God, the King of the Universe, the Merciful and Gracious, the High and Exalted God, He who inhabiteth eternity, Glorious and Holy is His

2 It is for this reason that the *Book Jetzira* is also called *אבות ואמהות* *the Letters or Alphabet of the Patriarch Abraham*.

3 בשלשים ושנים מלימות חכמה חקק יי' יהיה צבאות אלוהי ישראל אלוהים ודיים ומלך עולם אל רחום והנן רם ונשא שוכן עד מרום וקדוש שמו בשלשה ספרים בספר וספר וספר : ספר יצירה  
זק"א' משנה א'

name, hath created the world by means of (ספר) numbers, (ספור) phonetic language, and writing. (ספר)." (*Sepher Jetzira*, chapter i; *Mishna* i.)

First of all comes the fundamental number ten. This decade is divided into a tetrad and hexade, and thereby is shown the gradual development of the world out of nothing. At first there existed nothing except the Divine Substance, with the creative idea and the articulate creative word as the Spirit or the Holy Spirit, which is one with the Divine Substance and indivisible. Hence, the Spirit of the living God (רוח אלהים חיים) stands at the head of all things and is represented by the number *one*. "One is the spirit of the living God, blessed be His name, who liveth for ever! voice, spirit, and word, this is the Holy Ghost." (Chapter i, *Mishna* ix). From this Spirit the whole universe proceeded in gradual and successive emanations, in the following order. The creative *air*, represented by number *two*, emanated from the Spirit (רוח מרח). "In it He engraved the twenty-two letters." The *water* again, represented by the number *three*, proceeded from the air (מים מרח). "In it He engraved darkness and emptiness, slime and dung." Whilst the *ether* or *fire*, represented by the number *four*, emanated from the water (אש ממים). "In it He engraved the throne of His glory, the Ophanim, the Seraphim, the sacred animals, and the ministering angels, and from these three he formed His habitation; as it is written—'He maketh the wind his messengers, flaming fire his servants'"<sup>5</sup> (Cap. i. *Mish.* ix, x.) These intermediate members between the Creator and the created world sustain a *passive* and *created* relationship to God, and

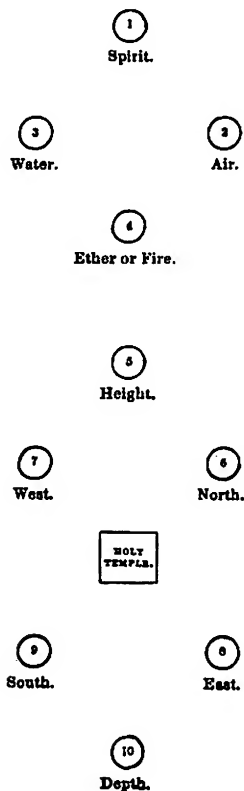
4 אחת רוח אלהים חיים ברוך ומבורך שמו של די העולמים קול רוח חיבור זה רוח חקיש : פרק א' משנה ט'

5 שהים רוח מרח חק חצב בה עשרים ושתים אותיות יסוד של אמות ושבעה כסולות ושנים עשר פשוטות ורוח אחת סוף : שלש מים מרח חק חצב בהן והו ובהו רש ושיס חקן כמין שדנה חציבן כמין דעסה סכנ כמין מציבה : ארבע אש ממים חק חצב בה כסא הכבוד ואופנים ושרים חיות הקדש ומלאכי הזרת ומשלשון יסוד מעוני שנאמר עשה מלאכיו ודחת משרתי אש ודחם : פרק א' משנה ט' ר'



*an acting and creating* relationship to the world ; so that God is neither in immediate connection with the created and material universe, nor is His creative fiat hindered by matter.

Then comes the hexade, each unit of which represents space in the six directions (שש קצוות), or the four corners of the world, east, west, north, and south, as well as height and depth which emanated from the ether, and in the centre of which is the Holy Temple supporting the whole (הדיכל הקודש) (מכון באמצע). The position of the decade is therefore as follows—



These constitute the primordial ten, from which the whole universe proceeded.

And lastly follow "the twenty-two letters, by means of which God, having drawn, hewn, and weighed them, and having variously changed and put them together, formed the souls of everything that has been made, and that shall be made."<sup>6</sup> (Chapter ii, *Mishna* ii.) These twenty-two letters of the alphabet are then divided into three groups, consisting respectively of, 1, *the three mothers, or fundamental letters* (שלש אמות), 2, *seven double* (שבע כפולות) and 3, *twelve simple consonants* (שנים עשר פשוטות), to deduce therefrom a triad of elements, a heptade of opposites, and a duodecimo of simple things, in the following manner.

#### 1. THREE MOTHERS, ALEPH, MEM, SHIN. שלש אמות אמ"ש

The above-named three primordial elements, viz., ether, water and air, which were as yet partially ideal and ethereal, became more concrete and palpable in the course of emanation. Thus the fire developed itself into the visible heaven, the elementary water thickened into the earth, embracing sea and land, whilst the elementary air became the atmospheric air. These constitute the three fundamental types of the universe (שלש אמות בעולם). The three primordial elements also thickened still more in another direction, and gave birth to a new order of creatures, which constitute the course of the year and the temperatures. From the ether developed itself heat, from the water emanated cold, and from the air proceeded the mild temperature which shows itself in the rain or wet. These constitute the fundamental points of the year (שלש אמות בשנה). Whereupon the three primordial elements developed themselves in another direction again, and gave rise to the human organism. The ether sent forth the human head, which is the seat of intelligence; the water gave

6 עשרים ושתיים אותיות יסוד חקקו חצבן שקלן והמירן צרפן צר בהם נפש כל היצור ונפש כל העצור לצור : שם שני שנה ב'.

rise to the body, or the abdominal system; whilst the air, which is the central element, developed itself into the genital organ. These three domains, viz., the macrocosm, the revolution of time, and the microcosm, which proceeded from the three primordial elements, are exhibited by the three letters *Aleph* (א), *Mem* (מ) and *Shin* (ש.) Hence it is said that by means of these three letters—which, both in their phonetic and sacred character, represent the elements, inasmuch as א, as a gentle aspirate, and as the initial of אֵיר *air*, symbolises THE AIR; מ, as a labial or mute, and as the initial of מַיִם *water*, represents THE WATER; whilst ש, as a sibilant, and as the last letter of שֵׁן *fire*, typifies THE FIRE (Chapter iii, *Mishna* iii)—God created

*In the World*—The Fire, Water, Air.

*In Man*—The Head, Body, Breast.

*In the Year*—Heat, Cold, Wet.

2. SEVEN DOUBLE CONSONANTS—BETH, GIMEL, DALETH, CAPH, PE, RESH, TAU שבע כפולות בנרכפרת

The three dominions proceeding from the triad of the primordial elements which emanated from the unity continued to develop themselves still further. In the macrocosm were developed the seven planets, in time the seven days, and in the microcosm the seven sensuous faculties. These are represented by the seven double consonants of the alphabet. Hence it is said that by means of these seven letters, which are called double because they have a double pronunciation, being sometimes aspirated and sometimes not, according to their being with or without the *Dagesh*, God created—

*In the World*—Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon.

*In Man*—Wisdom, Riches, Dominion, Life, Favour, Progeny, Peace.

*In the Year*—Sabbath, Thursday, Tuesday, Sunday, Friday, Wednesday, Monday.

Owing to the opposite = double pronunciation of these seven letters, being hard and soft, they are also the symbols of the seven opposites (תמורות) in which human life moves, viz., wisdom and ignorance, riches and poverty, fruitfulness and barrenness, life and death, liberty and bondage, peace and war, beauty and deformity. Moreover, they correspond to the seven ends (שבע קצוות), above and below, east and west, north and south, and the Holy Place in the centre, which supports them; and with them God formed the seven heavens, the seven earths or countries, the seven weeks from the feast of Passover to Pentecost. (Chapter iii, *Mishna*, i-v; cap. iv, *Mishna*, i-iii.)

### 3. TWELVE SIMPLE CONSONANTS. שתים עשר פשוטות.

The three dominions then respectively developed themselves into twelve parts, the macrocosm into the twelve signs of the Zodiac, time into twelve months, and the microcosm into twelve active organs. This is shown by the twelve simple consonants of the alphabet. Thus it is declared, that by means of the twelve letters, which are יהוה חטי לן סעצק, God created the twelve signs of the Zodiac, viz. :—

*In the World*—Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces.

*In Man*—The organs of Sight, Hearing, Smelling, Talking, Taste, Copulating, Dealing, Walking, Thinking, Anger, Laughter, Sleeping.

*In the Year*—The twelve months, viz., Nisan, Jiar, Sivan, Tamus, Ab, Elul, Tishri, Cheshvan, Kislev, Tebet, Shebat, Adar. (Comp. chapter v, *Mishna* i.)

The three dominions continued gradually to develop into that infinite variety of objects which is perceptible in each. This infinite variety, proceeding from the combination of a few, is propounded by means of the great diversity of combinations and permutations of which the whole alphabet is capable.

These letters, small in number, being only twenty-two, by their power of *combination* and *transposition*, yield an endless number of words and figures, and thus become the types of all the varied phenomena in the creation.<sup>7</sup> "Just as the twenty-two letters yield two hundred and thirty-one types by combining *Aleph* (א) with all the letters, and all the letters with *Aleph*; *Beth* (ב), with all the letters, and all the letters with *Beth*, so all the formations and all that is spoken proceed from one name." (Chapter ii, *Mishna*, iv.) The table on the opposite page will shew how the two hundred and thirty-one types are obtained by the combination of the twenty-two letters.

The infinite variety in creation is still more strikingly exhibited by permutations, of which the Hebrew alphabet is capable, and through which an infinite variety of types is obtained. Hence the remark<sup>8</sup>—"Two letters form two houses, three letters build six houses, four build twenty-four, five build a hundred and twenty houses, six build seven hundred and twenty houses; and from thenceforward go out and think what the mouth cannot utter and the ear cannot hear." (Chapter iv, *Mishna* iv.) The following table will show how the letters, by permutation, will yield an infinite variety.

TABLE OF PERMUTATION.

a. Two letters	b. Three letters	c. Four letters			
1. אב 2. בא	1. אבג 2. אבז 3. אבד 4. אבט 5. אבכ 6. אבמ	19. דאבג 20. דאבז 21. דאבד 22. דאבט 23. דאבכ 24. דאבמ			
form one.	build six.	build twenty-four.			

7 כיצד שקלן חמין אלף עם כולם וכולם עם אלף, בית עם כולם וכולם עם בית וחרת חלילה  
 נמצא כל היצור וכל הדבור יוצא בשם אחד: טק שני משנה ד'  
 8 שתי אותיות בנות שתי בתים שלושה בנות ששה בתים ארבע בנות ארבע וצדדים בתים  
 חמש בנות מאה וצדדים בתים שש בנות שבע מאות וצדדים בתים שבע מאות ואין צד חשוב מה שאין  
 דעה יכולה לדבר ואין האופן יכולה לשמוע: טק ד' משנה ד'

[illegible]

In order to ascertain how often a certain number of letters can be transposed, the product of the preceding number must be multiplied with it. Thus—

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Letter } 2 \times 1 &= 2 \\ 3 \times 2 &= 6 \\ 4 \times 6 &= 24 \\ 5 \times 24 &= 120 \\ 6 \times 120 &= 720 \\ 7 \times 720 &= 5040 \text{ and so on.}\end{aligned}$$

Accordingly, the material form of the spirit, represented by the twenty-two letters of the alphabet, is the form of all existing beings. Apart from the three dominions, the macrocosm, time, and microcosm, it is only the Infinite who can be perceived, and of whom this triad testifies; for which reason it is denominated "the three true witnesses."<sup>9</sup> Each of this triad, notwithstanding its multifariousness, constitutes a system, having its own centre and dominion.<sup>10</sup> Just as God is the centre of the universe, the heavenly dragon is the centre of the macrocosm; the foundation of the year is the revolution of the Zodiac; whilst the centre of the microcosm is the heart.<sup>11</sup> The first is like a king on his throne, the second is like a king living among his subjects, and the third is like a king in war. The reason why the heart of man is like a monarch in the midst of war is, that the twelve principal organs of the human body<sup>12</sup> "are arrayed against each other in battle array; three serve love, three hatred, three engender life, and three death. The three engendering love are the heart, the ears and the mouth; the three for enmity are the

9 ידים נאמנים עולם שנה נפש: פרק ו' משנה א'

10 אחד על גבי שלשה שלשה על גבי שבעה שבעה על גבי שנים עשר וכולן ארוקן זה בזה: פרק ו' משנה ג'

11 הלי בעולם כמלך על כסאו גלגל בשנה: כמלך במדינה לב בגש כמלך במלחמה

12 שנים עשר עומדים במלחמה שלשה אוחזים שלשה שואים שלשה מחדים שלשה ממיחים שלשה אוחזים הלב והאזניים והפה שלשה שונאים והכנר והמרה והלשון ואל מלך נאמן מושל בכולן אחד על גבי שלשה שלשה על גבי שבעה שבעה על גבי שנים עשר וכולן ארוקן זה בזה: פרק ו' משנה ג'

Owing to the opposite = double pronunciation of these seven letters, being hard and soft, they are also the symbols of the seven opposites (תמורות) in which human life moves, viz., wisdom and ignorance, riches and poverty, fruitfulness and barrenness, life and death, liberty and bondage, peace and war, beauty and deformity. Moreover, they correspond to the seven ends (שבע קצוות), above and below, east and west, north and south, and the Holy Place in the centre, which supports them; and with them God formed the seven heavens, the seven earths or countries, the seven weeks from the feast of Passover to Pentecost. (Chapter iii, *Mishna*, i-v; cap. iv, *Mishna*, i-iii.)

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*In Man*—The organs of Sight, Hearing, Smelling, Talking, Taste, Copulating, Dealing, Walking, Thinking, Anger, Laughter, Sleeping.

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The three dominions continued gradually to develop into that infinite variety of objects which is perceptible in each. This infinite variety, proceeding from the combination of a few, is propounded by means of the great diversity of combinations and permutations of which the whole alphabet is capable.







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9 עדים נאמנים שולם שנה נפש: פרק ו' משנה א'

10 אחד על גבי שלשה שלשה על גבי שבעה שבעה על גבי שנים עשר וכולן אדוקין זה בזה:

פרק ו' משנה ג'

11 הלי בעולם כמלך על כסאו גלגל בשנה כמלך במדינה לב בגוש כמלך במלחמה

12 שנים עשר עומדים במלחמה שלשה אוחזים שלשה שנאים שלשה מדדים שלשה כמחים

שלשה אוחזים הלב והאזניים והפה שלשה שונאים הכבד המרה והלשון ואל מלך נאמן מושל בכולן

אחד על גבי שלשה שלשה על גבי שבעה שבעה על גבי שנים עשר וכולן אדוקין זה בזה: פרק ו'

משנה ג'

liver, the gall and the tongue ; but God, the faithful King, rules over all the three systems. One [*i.e.*, God] is over the three, the three are over the seven, the seven over the twelve, and all are internally connected with each other." (Chapter vi, *Mishna* iii.) Thus the whole creation is one connected whole ; it is like a pyramid pointed at the top, which was its beginning, and exceedingly broad in its basis, which is its fullest development in all its multitudinous component parts. Throughout the whole are perceptible two opposites, with a reconciling medium. Thus, in the macrocosm, "the ethereal fire is above, the water below, and the air is between these hostile elements to reconcile them." (Chapter vi, *Mishna* i.) The same is the case in the heaven, earth and the atmosphere, as well as in the microcosm. But all the opposites in the cosmic, telluric and organic spheres, as well as in the moral world, are designed to balance each other. "God has placed in all things one to oppose the other ; good to oppose evil, good proceeding from good, and evil from evil ; good purifies evil, and evil purifies good ; good is in store for the good, and evil is reserved for the evil." (Chapter vi, *Mishna* ii.)

From this analysis of its contents it will be seen that *the Book Jetzira*, which the Kabbalists claim as their oldest document, has really nothing in common with the cardinal doctrines of the Kabbalah. There is not a single word in it bearing on *the En Soph*, the Archetypal Man, the speculations about the being and nature of the Deity, and *the Sephiroth*, which constitute the essence of the Kabbalah. Even its treatment of the ten digits, as part of the thirty-two ways of wisdom whereby God created the universe, which has undoubtedly suggested to the authors of the Kabbalah the idea of the *ten Sephiroth*, is quite different from the mode in which the Kabbalistic *Sephiroth* are depicted, as may be seen from a most cursory comparison of the respective diagrams which we have given to illustrate the plans of the two systems.

Besides the language of *the Book Jetzira* and the train of ideas therein enunciated, as the erudite Zunz rightly remarks, shew that this treatise belongs to *the Geonim* period, *i.e.*, about the ninth century of the Christian era, when it first became known.<sup>13</sup> The fabrication of this pseudograph was evidently suggested by the fact that the Talmud mentions some *treatises on the Creation*, denominated **הלכות יצירה** and **ספר יצירה** (*Sanhedrim* 65 b ; 67 b) which "R. Chanina and R. Oshaja studied every Friday, whereby they produced a calf three years old and ate it;"<sup>14</sup> and whereby R. Joshua ben Chananja declared he could take fruit and instantly produce the trees which belong to them. (*Jerusalem Sanhedrim*, cap. vii. *ad finem*.<sup>15</sup>) Indeed Dr. Chwolson of Petersburg has shown in his treatise "*on the Remnants of the ancient Babylonian Literature in Arabic translations*," that the ancient Babylonians laid it down as a maxim that if a man were minutely and carefully to observe the process of nature, he would be able to imitate nature and produce sundry creatures. He would not only be able to create plants and metals, but even living beings. These artificial productions the Babylonians call **תולידות** *productions* or **אבונות** *formations*. Gutami, the author of the *Agricultura Nabat*, who lived about 1400 B.C., devoted a long chapter to the doctrine of artificial productions. The ancient sorcerer Ankebuta declares, in his work on artificial productions, that he created a man, and shows how he did it; but he confesses that the human being was without language and reason, that he could not eat, but simply opened and closed his eyes. This and many other fragments adds R—, from whose communication we quote, show that there were many works in Babylon which

13 *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*. Berlin, 1892, p. 165, &c.

14 רב הניח רוב אשתיא דכל מעלי שבתא הוּוּ עסקי בהלכות יצירה ומיבירי להוּ עינלא חילתא ואכלי לי : סנהדרין ס"ו ב'

15 אמר ר' יהושע בן חנניא יכול אנה על די ספר יצירה נסב קרין ואבשיחין ועבדלוק מילין סבין וחדנתין עבדין מילין ושביין :

treated on the artificial productions of plants, metals, and living beings, and that the *Book Jetzira*, mentioned in the Talmud, was most probably such a Babylonian document."<sup>16</sup>

As the document on creation, mentioned in the Talmud, was lost in the course of time, the author of the Treatise which we have analysed tried to supply the loss, and hence not only called his production by the ancient name ספר יצירה *the Book of Creation*, but ascribed it to the patriarch Abraham. The perusal, however, of a single page of this book will convince any impartial reader that it has as little in common with the magic work mentioned in the Talmud or with the ancient Babylonian works which treat of human creations, as with the speculations about the being and nature of the Deity, *the En Soph* and *the Sephiroth*, which are the essence of the Kabbalah.<sup>17</sup>

Having shown that the *Book Jetzira*, claimed by the Kabbalists as their first and oldest code of doctrines, has no affinity with the real tenets of the Kabbalah, we have now to examine :—

16 *Der Israelitische Volkslehrer*, vol. ix. Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1859, p. 304, &c.

17 For those who should wish to prosecute the study of the metaphysical *Book Jetzira*, we must mention that this Treatise was first published in a Latin translation by Postellus, Paris, 1552. It was then published in the original with five commentaries, viz., the spurious one of Sandia Gaon, one by Moses Nachmanides, one by Eleazer Worms, one by Abraham b. David, and one by Moses Botarel. Mantua, 1505. Another Latin version is given in *Jo. Pistorii artis cubalisticalis semptorum*, 1587, Tom. 1, p. 809 *seq.*, which is ascribed to Reuchlin and Paul Ricci; and a third Latin translation, with notes and the Hebrew text, was published by Rittangel, Amsterdam, 1602. The Book is also published with a German translation and notes, by John Friedrich v. Meyer, Leipzig, 1830. As useful helps to the understanding of this difficult Book we may mention The Kusari of R. Jehudah Ha-Levi, with Cassel's German version and learned annotations, Part iv. chap 25, p. 344, &c., Leipzig, 1853; Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden* (Berlin, 1832), p. 165, &c.; Graetz, *Gnosticismus und Judenthum* (Krotoschin, 1840), p. 102, &c.; Jellinek, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala*, Part i (Leipzig, 1852), p. 3, &c. Comp. also Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebræa*, vol. i., p. 23, &c., vol. ii., p. 1196, vol. iii., p. 17, vol. iv., p. 753, &c.; *Philosophie der Geschichte*, vol. i., 2nd ed. (Münster, 1837), p. 63, &c.; Steinschneider, *Jewish Literature* (London, 1857), pp. 107, 302, &c.; and by the same author, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, col. 552.

## II. *The Book Sohar.*

Before we enter into an examination concerning the date and authorship of this renowned code of the Kabbalistic doctrines, it will be necessary to describe the component parts of the *Sohar*. It seems that the proper *Sohar*, which is a commentary on the five Books of Moses, according to the division into Sabbatic sections, was originally called *מדרש יחי אור* *the Midrash or Exposition, Let there be Light*, from the words in Gen. i, 4; because the real Midrash begins with the exposition of this verse. The name *Sohar* (זוהר), i.e. *Light, Splendour*, was given to it afterwards, either because this document begins with the theme light, or because the word *Sohar* frequently occurs on the first page. It is referred to by the name of the *Book Sohar* (ספר הזוהר) in the component parts of the treatise itself. (Comp. *The Faithful Shepherd, Sohar*, iii, 153 b.) The *Sohar* is also called *Midrash of R. Simon b. Jochai* (מדרש של ר' שמעון בן יוחאי), because this Rabbi is its reputed author.<sup>18</sup> Interspersed throughout the *Sohar*, either as parts of the text with special titles, or in separate columns with distinct superscriptions, are the following dissertations, which we detail according to the order of the pages on which they respectively commence.

1. *Tosephta* and *Mathaithan* (תוספתא and מתניתן), or *Small Additional Pieces* which are given in vol. i, 31 b; 32 b; 37 a; 54 b; 59 a; 60 b; 62; 98 b; 121 a; 122, 123 b; 147; 151 a; 152 a; 232, 233 b; 234 a; vol. ii, 4, 27 b;

<sup>18</sup> The *Sohar* was first published by Da Padova and Jacob b. Naphtali, 3 vols. 4to, Mantua, 1558-1560, with an Introduction by Is. de Lattes; then again in Cremona, 1560, fol.; Lublin, 1623, fol.; then again edited by Rosenroth, with the variations from the works *Derech Emeth*, and with the explanation of the difficult words by Issachar Bär, an Index of all the passages of Scripture explained in the *Sohar*, and with an Introduction by Moses b. Uri Sheraga Bloch, Sulzbach, 1684, fol.; with an additional Index of matters, Amsterdam, 1714, 3 vols. 8vo; *ibid.* 1728; 1772, and 1805. The references in this Essay are to the last mentioned edition. It must, however, be remarked that most of the editions have the same paging. Comp. Steinschneider, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana Col.*, 537-545; Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, iii, 329-335.

28 *a*; 68 *b*; 135 *b*; vol. iii, 29 *b*; 30 *a*; 54 *b*; 55. They briefly discuss, by way of supplement, the various topics of the Kabbalah, such as the *Sephiroth*, the emanation of the primordial light, &c., &c., and address themselves in apostrophes to the initiated in these mysteries, calling their attention to some doctrine or explanation.

2. *Hechaloth* (היכלות) or *The Mansions and Abodes* forming part of the text, vol. i, 38 *a*—45 *b*; vol. ii, 245 *a*—269 *a*. This portion of the *Sohar* describes the topographical structure of Paradise and Hell. The mansions or palaces, which are seven in number, were at first the habitation of the earthly Adam, but, after the fall of the protoplasts, were re-arranged to be the abode of the beatified saints, who for this reason have the enjoyment both of this world and the world to come. The seven words in Gen. i, 2 are explained to describe these seven mansions. *Sohar*, i, 45 *a*, describes the seven Hells. In some Codices, however, this description of the Infernal Regions is given vol. ii, 202 *b*.

3. *Sithre Tora* (סתרי תורה), or *The Mysteries of the Pentateuch*, given in separate columns, and at the bottom of pages as follows. Vol. i, 74 *b*; 75 *a*; 76 *b*—77 *a*; 78 *a*—81 *b*; 97 *a*—102 *a*; 107 *b*—111 *a*; 146 *b*—149 *b*; 151 *a*; 152 *b*; 154 *b*—157 *b*; 161 *b*—162 *b*; 165; vol. ii, 146 *a*. It discusses the divers topics of the Kabbalah, such as the evolution of the *Sephiroth*, the emanation of the primordial light, &c., &c.

4. *Midrash Ha-Neelam* (מדרש הנעלם), or *The Hidden Midrash*, occupies parallel columns with the text in vol. i, 97 *a*—140 *a*, and endeavours more to explain passages of Scripture mystically, by way of *Remasim* (רמזים) and *Gematrias* (גמטריאות), and allegorically, than to propound the doctrines of the Kabbalah. Thus Abraham's prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah is explained as an intercession by the congregated souls of the saints in behalf of the sinners about to be



punished. (*Sohar*, i, 104 b.) Lot's two daughters are the two proclivities in man, good and evil. (*Ibid.* 110.) Besides this mystical interpretation wherein the Kabbalistic rules of exegesis are largely applied, the distinguishing feature of this portion of the *Sohar* is its discussion on the properties and destiny of the soul, which constitute an essential doctrine of the Kabbalah.

5. *Raja Mehemna* (רעיא מַהֲמְנָא), or the *Faithful Shepherd*. This portion of the *Sohar* is given in the second and third volumes, in parallel columns with the text; and when it is too disproportioned for columns, is given at the bottom or in separate pages, as follows. Vol. ii, 25, 40, 59 b; 91 b—93 a; 134 b, 157 b—159 a; 187 b—188 a; vol. iii, 3 a—4 b; 20 a, 24 b, 27, 28 a—29 a; 33 a—34 a; 42 a, 44 a; 63; 67 b—68 a; 81 b—83 b; 85 b—86 a; 88 b—90 a; 92 b—93 a; 97 a—101 a; 103 b—104 a; 108 b—111 b; 121 b—126 a; 145 a—146 b; 152 b—153 b; 174 a—175 a; 178 b—179 b; 180 a, 215 a—239 a; 242 a—258 a; 263 a—264 a; 270 b—283 a. It derives its name from the fact that it records the discussions which Moses the Faithful Shepherd held in conference with the prophet Elias, and with R. Simon b. Jochai, the celebrated master of the Kabbalistic school, who is called *the Sacred Light* (בְּרִיצְנָא קִדְיִשָּׁא). The chief object of this portion is to show the profound and allegorical import of the Mosaic commandments and prohibitions, as well as of the Rabbinic injunctions and religious practices which obtained in the course of time. At the dialogue which Moses the lawgiver holds with R. Simon b. Jochai the Kabbalistic lawgiver, not only is the prophet Elias present, but Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, David, Solomon, and God himself make their appearance; the disciples of R. Simon are frequently in ecstasies when they hold converse with these illustrious patriarchs and kings of bygone days.

6. *Raze Derazin* (רַזֵּי דִרְזִין), or the *Secret of Secrets*,

*Original Secrets*, is given in vol. ii, 70 a—75 a, and is especially devoted to the physiognomy of the Kabbalah, and the connection of the soul with the body, based upon the advice of Jethro to his son-in-law Moses ואתה תחזוה and *thou shalt look into the face*. (Exod. xviii, 21.)

7. *Saba Demishpatim* (סבא דמשפטים), or *the Discourse of the Aged in Mishpatim*, given in vol. ii, 94 a—114 a. The Aged is the prophet Elias, who holds converse with R. Simon b. Jochai about the doctrine of metempsychosis, and the discussion is attached to the Sabbatic section called משפטים, i.e., Exod. xxi, 1—xxiv, 18, because the Kabbalah takes this word to signify *punishments of souls* (דינין), and finds its psychology in this section. So enraptured were the disciples when their master, the Sacred Light, discoursed with Moses on this subject, that they knew not whether it was day or night, or whether they were in the body or out of the body. (*Sohar*, ii, 105 b.)

8. *Siphra Detzniutha* (ספרא דצניעותא), or *the Book of Secrets or Mysteries*, given in vol. ii, 176 b—178 b. It is divided into five sections (פרקים), and is chiefly occupied with discussing the questions involved in the creation, *e. gr.* the transition from the infinite to the finite, from absolute unity to multifariousness, from pure intelligence to matter, the double principle of masculine and feminine (אבא ואמא), expressed in the Tetragrammaton, the androgynous protoplast, the Demonology concealed in the letters of Scripture, as seen in Gen. vi, 2; Josh. ii, 1; 1 Kings, viii, 3, 16; the mysteries contained in Isa. i, 4, and the doctrine of the *Sephiroth* concealed in Gen. i; &c., as well as with showing the import of the letters יוהי"ה composing the Tetragrammaton which were the principal agents in the creation. This portion of the *Sohar* has been translated into Latin by Rosenroth in the second volume of his *Kabbala Denudata*, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1684.

9. *Idra Rabba* (אִדְרָא רַבָּא), or *the Great Assembly* is given in vol. iii, 127 *b*—145 *a*, and derives its name from the fact that it purports to give the discourses which R. Simon b. Jochai delivered to his disciples who congregated around him in large numbers. Upon the summons of the Sacred Light, his disciples assembled to listen to the secrets and enigmas contained in the *Book of Mysteries*. Hence it is chiefly occupied with a description of the form and various members of the Deity, a disquisition on the relation of the Deity, in his two aspects of the *Aged* (עַתִּיק) and the *Young* (זַעִיר), to the creation and the universe, as well as on the diverse gigantic members of the Deity, such as the head, the beard, the eyes, the nose, &c., &c.; a dissertation on pneumatology, demonology, &c., &c. It concludes with telling us that three of the disciples died during these discussions. This portion too is given in a Latin translation in the second volume of Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata*.

10. *Januka* (יְנוּקָא), or *the Discourse of the Young Man*, is given in vol. iii, 186 *a*—192 *a*, and forms part of the text of the *Sohar* on the Sabbatic section called *Balak*, i.e. Numb. xxii, 2—xxv, 9. It derives its name from the fact that the discourses therein recorded were delivered by a young man, under the following circumstances:—R. Isaac and R. Jehudah, two of R. Simon b. Jochai's disciples, when on a journey, and passing through the village where the widow of R. Hamnuna Saba resided, visited this venerable woman. She asked her son, the *young hero* of this discourse, who had just returned from school, to go to these two Rabbins to receive their benediction; but the youth would not approach them because he recognised, from the smell of their garments, that they had omitted reciting on that day the prescribed declaration about the unity of the Deity (שְׁמַי). When at meals this wonderful *Januka* gave them sundry discourses on the mysterious import of the washing of hands, based on

Exod: xxx, 20, on the grace recited at meals, on the *Shechinah*, on the angel who redeemed Jacob (Gen. xlviii, 16), &c., &c., which elicited the declaration from the Rabbins that "this youth is not the child of human parents" (הוא ינוקא לאו) (ב"נ הוא); and when hearing all this, R. Simon b. Jochai coincided in the opinion, that "this youth is of superhuman origin."

11. *Idra Suta* (אדרת זוטא) or the *Small Assembly*, is given in vol. iii, 287 b—296 b, and derives its name from the fact that many of the disciples of R. Simon b. Jochai had died during the course of these Kabbalistic revelations, and that this portion of the *Sohar* contains the discourses which the Sacred Light delivered before his death to the small assembly of six pupils, who still survived and congregated to listen to the profound mysteries. It is to a great extent a recapitulation of the *Idra Rabba*, occupying itself with speculations about the *Sephiroth*, the Deity in his three aspects (שלת רישין), or principles which successively developed themselves from each other, viz.—the *En Soph* (אין סוף), or the Boundless in his absolute nature, the *Macroprosopon* (אריך אנפין), or the Boundless as manifested in the first emanation, and the *Microprosopon* (זעיר אנפין), the other nine emanations; the abortive creations, &c., and concludes with recording the death of Simon b. Jochai, the Sacred Light and the medium through whom God revealed the contents of the *Sohar*. The *Idra Suta* has been translated into Latin by Rosenroth in the second volume of his *Kabbala Denudata*.

From this brief analysis of its component parts and contents, it will be seen that the *Sohar* does not propound a regular Kabbalistic system, but promiscuously and reiteratedly dilates upon the diverse doctrines of this theosophy, as indicated in the forms and ornaments of the Hebrew alphabet, in the vowel points and accents, in the Divine names and the letters of which they are composed, in the narratives of the

Bible, and in the traditional and national stories. Hence the *Sohar* is more a collection of homilies or rhapsodies on Kabbalistic subjects than treatises on the Kabbalah. It is for this very reason that it became the treasury of the Kabbalah to the followers of this theosophy. Its diversity became its charm. The long conversations between its reputed author, R. Simon b. Jochai, and Moses, the great lawgiver and true shepherd, which it records; the short and pathetic prayers inserted therein; the religious anecdotes; the attractive spiritual explanations of scripture passages, appealing to the hearts and wants of men; the description of the Deity and of the *Sephiroth* under tender forms of human relationships, comprehensible to the finite mind, such as father, mother, primeval man, matron, bride, white head, the great and small face, the luminous mirror, the higher heaven, the higher earth, &c., which it gives on every page, made the *Sohar* a welcome text-book for the students of the Kabbalah, who, by its vivid descriptions of divine love, could lose themselves in rapturous embraces with the Deity.

Now, the *Sohar* pretends to be a revelation from God, communicated through R. Simon b. Jochai, who flourished about A.D. 70—110, to his select disciples. We are told that "when they assembled to compose the *Sohar*, permission was granted to the prophet Elias, to all the members of the celestial college, to all angels, spirits, and superior souls, to assist them; and the ten spiritual substances [*i.e.*, *Sephiroth*] were charged to disclose to them their profound mysteries, which were reserved for the days of the Messiah." On the approach of death, R. Simon b. Jochai assembled the small number of his disciples and friends, amongst whom was his son, R. Eleazar, to communicate to them his last doctrines,<sup>19</sup> "when

19 וכך מסדרנו לנו רבי אבא יחזוב ורבי אלעזר ברי יליי ושאר חבריה יחדשין בלביהו: וחדר חלק  
ב'קף רס"ז ב' :

he ordered as follows—R. Aba shall write, R. Eleazar, my son, propound, and let my other associates quietly think about it.” (*Idra Suta, Sohar*, iii, 287 b.) It is upon the strength of these declarations, as well as upon the repeated representation of R. Simon b. Jochai as speaking and teaching throughout this production, that the *Sohar* is ascribed to this Rabbi on its very title-page, and that not only Jews, for centuries, but such distinguished Christian scholars as Lightfoot, Gill, Bartolucci, Pfeifer, Knorr von Rosenroth, Molitor, &c., have maintained this opinion. A careful examination, however, of the following internal and external evidence will show that this Thesaurus of the Kabbalah is the production of the thirteenth century.

1. The *Sohar* most fulsomely praises its own author, calls him the *Sacred Light* (בְּרִצְנִיָּה קְדִישָׁא), and exalts him above Moses, “the true Shepherd.”<sup>20</sup> “I testify by the sacred heavens and the sacred earth,” declares R. Simon b. Jochai, “that I now see what no son of man has seen since Moses ascended the second time on Mount Sinai, for I see my face shining as brilliantly as the light of the sun when it descends as a healing for the world; as it is written, ‘to you who fear my name shall shine the Sun of Righteousness with a healing in his wings.’ (Malachi, [iii, 20] iv, 2.) Yea, more, I know that my face is shining, but Moses did not know it nor understand it; for it is written (Exod. xxxiv, 29), ‘Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone.’” (*Sohar*, iii, 132 b; 144 a.) The disciples deify R. Simon in the *Sohar*, declaring that the verse, “all thy males shall appear before the Lord God” (Exod. xxiii, 17), refers to R. Simon b. Jochai,

20 אֲמַרְתֶּם עַל שְׁמִיָּהּ עֲלֵיךְ רַעְלָאן וְאֵינֶה קְדִישָׁה עֲלֵיהָ רַעְלָאן דְּאֵמָּה דְּחִי וְהִשְׁתָּה מִהּ וְלֹא דְּאֵמָּה  
 בְּרִי נֶשׁ מִיִּסְתָּה דְּסֻלֵּק מִשָּׁה וּמִנָּה תְּנִינָה לְשׁוּרָא דְּסִינִי דְּאֵמָּה דְּחִינָה אֲנִסְאֵי הַדִּין כְּהִנּוּרָא דְּשִׁכְרָא  
 תְּקִיטָא דְּחִסְדָּן לְמִסְקָא בְּאִמְחֻרָא לְעֵלְמָא דְּכֹחֵיב וְחִידָה לֵבָן יִרְאֵי שְׁמִי שְׂכֵשׁ צְדָקָה וּמִרְעָה בְּכִנְסִיָּה; וְעוֹד  
 דְּאֵמָּה דְּעֵנָה דְּאֲבָטָי הַדִּין וּמִשָּׁה לֹא יָדַע וְלֹא אֲכַתְלִי דְּהִי"ר וּמִשָּׁה לֹא יָדַע כִּי קָץ עוֹר פָּנָיו; וְעוֹד הֵלֵךְ  
 ג' דָּן ק"ב ב' 1

who is the Lord, and before whom all men must appear. (*Sohar*, ii, 38 a.)<sup>21</sup>

2. The *Sohar* quotes and mystically explains the Hebrew vowel points (i, 16 b; 24 b; ii, 116 a; iii, 65 a), which were introduced for the first time by R. Mocha of Palestine, A.D. 570, to facilitate the reading of the Scriptures for his students.<sup>22</sup>

3. The *Sohar* (רעיא מדימנה *Faithful Shepherd*, on section קדושים iii, 82 b), has literally borrowed two verses from the celebrated Hymn of Ibn Gebirol, who was born about A.D. 1021 and died in 1070. This Hymn which is entitled כתר מלכות *the Royal Diadem*, is a beautiful and pathetic composition, embodying the cosmic views of Aristotle, and forms part of the Jewish service for the evening preceding the Great Day of Atonement to the present day. The quotation in the *Sohar* from this Hymn is beyond the shadow of a doubt, as will be seen from the following comparison—

<i>Sohar.</i>	<i>Ibn Gebirol.</i>
ואשתארו [סדרא ושכשא] כנוסא בלא נשכחא	אבל יש אדון עליהם
דאיה אדון עליהם מחשך מאוריהם	מחשך מאוריהם

It must be borne in mind that, though the *Sohar* is written in Aramaic, yet this quotation is in Hebrew, and in the *rhyme* of Ibn Gebirol.<sup>23</sup>

4. The *Sohar* (i, 18 b; 23 a) quotes and explains the interchange, on the outside of the *Mezuza*,<sup>24</sup> of the words

21 כתיב יראה כל וכוך אל פני האדון ה' כאן פני האדון ה' דא רשב"י דסאן ראהו דכורא מן  
דכתיב בני לאחוזתא קמיה: ודא דלק ב' דף לח א':

<sup>22</sup> Comp. Alexander's edition of Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. MOCHA.

<sup>23</sup> Comp. Sachs, *Die religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien*, Berlin, 1845, p. 220, note 2.

<sup>24</sup> For a description of the *Mezuza*, which consists of a piece of parchment, whereon is written Deut vi, 4-9; xi, 13-21, put into a reed or hollow cylinder, and affixed to the right hand door-post of every door in the houses of the Jews, see Alexander's edition of Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. MEZUZA.

(כוז) *Jehovah our God is Jehovah* for (יהוה אלהינו יהוה) *Kuzu Bemuchzaz Kuzu*, by substituting for each letter its immediate predecessor in the alphabet, which was transplanted from France into Spain in the thirteenth century.<sup>25</sup>

5. The *Sohar* (iii, 232 b) uses the expression *Esnoga*, which is a Portuguese corruption of synagogue, and explains it in a Kabbalistic manner as a compound of two Hebrew words, i.e., *Es* = שן and *Noga* = נורה brilliant light.<sup>26</sup>

6. The *Sohar* (ii, 32 a) mentions the Crusades, the momentary taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders from the Infidels, and the retaking of it by the Saracens.<sup>27</sup> "Woe to the time," it says, "wherein Ishmael saw the world, and received the sign of circumcision! What did the Holy One, blessed be his name? He excluded the descendants of Ishmael, i.e., the Mahommedans, from the congregation in heaven, but gave them a portion on earth in the Holy Land, because of the sign of the covenant which they possess. The Mahommedans are, therefore, destined to rule for a time over the Holy Land; and they will prevent the Israelites from returning to it, till the merit of the Mahommedans is accomplished. At that time the descendants of Ishmael will be the occasion of terrible wars in the world, and the children of Edom, i.e., the Christians, will gather together against them and do battle with them, some at sea and some on land, and some in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and the victory will now

25. Comp. Nissen, in the collection of various Hebrew Dissertations, entitled ציץ, edited by Jost and Creizenach, vol. ii, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1842-43, p. 161, &c.

26 וְשִׁנְתָּה נֹגֶה וְנוֹרָה לֹאשׁ וּמִדְבַּר קִרִּי לְבִי כְּנִישָׁתָא אֵשׁ נֹגֶה: וְהָרַק הָלַךְ: דָּף ר' א'

27 וְזֶה עַל הַהוּא וּמִכָּאן דְּמִתְלִיד יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּעִלְמָא וְאַחֲנֹר • מִדָּה עֲבָר קב"ה אֲרֻחָא לְהוּ לְבִי יִשְׁמָעֵאל מִדְּבַר קוֹתָא דְּלִילָא וְהָרַב לְהוּ חוֹלְקָא לְהֵתָא בְּאַרְעָא קְדִישָׁא בְּנִין הָיוּ נִירוּ דְּבִהּ חֲמִינָן בִּן יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְמִישָׁלִם בְּאַרְעָא קְדִישָׁא כִּד אֲדִירוּ רִיקְנִיא מְכִילָא וּמִנ' סִי נִכְחָ דְּנִירוּ דְּלִהּ בְּרִיקְנִיא בְּלֵא שְׁלִימוּ: וְאִינוּן יַעֲבֹדוּן לְהוּן לְבִנֵּי לְאַהֲבָא לְדוֹכִיִּיהוּ מִדְּיִשְׁהָלִים הָיוּ וְכוּתָא דְּבִי יִשְׁמָעֵאל: וְחִמִּינָן בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַתְרָא קְרִיבִין הִקְפִּין בְּעִלְמָא לְאַהֲבָאִישׁא בְּנֵי אֲדוּם עֲלִיִּיהוּ וְהִתְעַרְן קִרְבָּא בְּהוּ דָּד עַל יִסָּא וְהָרַב עַל יִשָּׁא וְהָרַב סִסְדָּא לִירוּשָׁלַיִם וְיִשְׁלֹמֹן אֵלִין בְּאֵלִין וְאַרְעָא קְדִישָׁא לֹא יִתְמַסֵּר לְבִי אֲדוּם: וְהָרַק הָלַךְ ב' דָּף לֵב א'



be on the one side and then on the other, but the Holy Land will not remain in the hands of the Christians."

7. The *Sohar* records events which transpired A.D. 1264. Thus on Numb. xxiv, 17, which the *Sohar* explains as referring to the time preceding the advent of Messiah, it remarks,<sup>28</sup> "the Holy One, blessed be he, is prepared to rebuild Jerusalem. Previous to the rebuilding thereof he will cause to appear, a wonderful and splendid star, which will shine seventy days. It will first be seen on Friday, Elul = July 25th, and disappear on Saturday or Friday evening at the end of seventy days. On the day preceding [its disappearance, *i.e.* October 2nd] when it will still be seen in the city of Rome, on that self-same day three high walls of that city of Rome and the great palace will fall, and the pontiff ruler of the city will die." (*Sohar* iii, 212 b.) Now the comet here spoken of appeared in Rome, July 25th, 1264, and was visible till October 2nd, which are literally the seventy days mentioned in the *Sohar*. Moreover, July 25th, when the comet first appeared, actually happened on a Friday; on the day of its disappearance, October 2nd, the sovereign pontiff of Rome, Urban IV, died at Perugia, when it was believed that the appearance of the comet was the omen of his death, and the great and strong palace (היכלא רבבא) Vincimonto, fell on the self-same day, October 2nd, into the hands of the insurrectionists.<sup>29</sup>

8. The *Sohar*, in assigning a reason why its contents were not revealed before, says that the "time in which R. Simon ben Jochai lived was peculiarly worthy and glorious, and that it is near the advent of the Messiah," for which cause this

28. חנן זמין קב"ה למבני ירושלים ולאחריה חזר כנבא קב"ה סגפא בע' דהסין ובע' זקן נהרין סגפא במספאות קב"ה ושתאבון ביה ע' כנבין אחרנין ודא נהר ודא ע' ימין וביזמא שחיתא יחזי כ"ה ימין לירחא שחיתא [שביעא] יחזניש ביזמא שביעא לסיף ע' ימין יומא קדמא יחזי בקדמא דרומי ודא יומא יסלון ג' שורין עלאן סהדיא קדמא דרומי ודא היכלא רבבא יסלון ושלמא ודא קדמא יסלון: ודא חלק ג' דא ר"ב ב'!

29. Comp. Beer, in Frankel's *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, vol. v, Leipzig, 1856, p. 156-160.



appearing as one of the later works, and was not attributed to Simon ben Jochai."

12. That Moses de Leon, who first published and sold the *Sohar*, as the production of R. Simon b. Jochai, was himself the author of it, was admitted by his own wife and daughter, as will be seen from the following account in the *Book Juchassin*, (p.p. 88, 89, 95, ed. Filipowski, London, 1857), which we give in an abridged form.<sup>32</sup> When Isaac of Akko, who escaped the massacre after the capture of this city (A.D. 1291), came to Spain and there saw the *Sohar*, he was anxious to ascertain whether it was genuine, since it pretended to be a Palestine production, and he, though born and brought up in the Holy Land, in constant intercourse with the disciples of the celebrated Kabbalist, Nachmanides, had never heard a syllable about this marvellous work. Now, Moses de Leon, whom he met in Valladolid, declared to him on a most solemn oath that he had at Avila an ancient exemplar, which was the very autograph of R. Simon ben Jochai, and offered to submit it to him to be tested. In the meantime, however, Moses de Leon was taken ill on his journey home, and died at Arevolo, A.D. 1305. But two

82 בחשו אר כתב ר' יצחק דמן עכו כי ענו נחריה בשנת חמשים לפרט ושנהרגו חסדי ישראל שם בר' מיהות ב"ד, ובשנת ס"ה היה זה ר' יצחק דמן עכו בנבחרה באיטליה וניצל מינו ובשנת ס"ה עצמה בא לביטליה ומצאתי בספר דברי הימים שלו ר"ל מר' יצחק דמן עכו הוא שעשה ספר קבלה בשנת הומלאך ונחריה בומנו עכו ונשבו כולם בומן בן בנו של חסדון' ובומו בן ר' דוד בן אברהם בן הרמב"ם ו"ל. וזאת הלך לסדר לחקור כיצד נמצא בומנו מר הוהר אשר נשא ר' שמעון ור' אלעזר בנו במערה אשר הוויס לאמתתו, באור יראו אר: ואמר לאמתתו. מפני שדין מקצת אשר ויין. ואמר שקבל כי מה שמצא בלשון ירושלמי האמין כי הם דברי ר' שמעון ואם יושלים לו על שאלתי כי הרב הנאמן הרמב"ן ו"ל שלח אותו מארץ ישראל לקסלוניא לבנו חביאו הרח לארץ ארנון ו"א לאלק"י ושל ביד החכם ר' משה די ליאון הוא שאומרים עליו ר' משה דיוראל הנארה' ו"א שמעילם לא חבר רשב' סדר זה, אבל ר' משה זה היה יודע שם חכונת ובנתו ויכתוב ר' כשה זה דברים נפלאים וליכין יקח בהם מחזיר גדול כסף וזהו רב חולה דברו באשלי רבני ואמר מתוך הספר אשר חבר רשב' ור' אלעזר בנו חברו אני מתחל להם דברים אלו. ואני בנואי סדרה ואבא אל עיר ואלדוליד אשר המלך (שם) ואכנא שם לר' משה זה ואמצא חן בעיני ודבר עמי וידר לי וישבע לאמר: כה יעשה לי אלקים וכה יוסף אם לא הספר הקדמון אשר חבר רשב' אשר הוא היום בניהי במדינת שבילי היא אויליה בבואך אלי שם ארץ. וזו אדר הדברים האלה נסד ממני וילך ר' משה זה אל עיר

distinguished men of Avila, David Rafen and Joseph de Avila, who were determined to sift the matter, ascertained the falsehood of this story from the widow and daughter of Moses de Leon. Being a rich man and knowing that Moses de Leon left his family without means, Joseph de Avila promised that if she would give him the original MS. of the *Sohar* from which her husband made the copies, his son should marry her daughter, and that he would give them a handsome dowry. Whereupon the widow and daughter declared, that they did not possess any such MS., that Moses de Leon never had it, but that he composed the *Sohar* from his own head, and wrote it with his own hand. Moreover, the widow candidly confessed that she had frequently asked her husband why he published the production of his own intellect under another man's name, and that he told her that if he were to publish it under his own name nobody would buy it, whereas under the name of R. Simon b. Jochai it yielded him a large revenue. This account is confirmed in a most remarkable manner by the fact that—

ארבלא לשוב אל בדת לאוילא ודחלא בארבלא וימא שמי' וכשמי' הנשואה היטב ויהי לי עד מוח ואצא ואשים לדרך פסמי ואבא אל אוילא ומצאתי שם חכם גדול וזמן ושמו ר' דוד ראבן קורסו ואמציאה חן בעיניו ואשניחיו לאמר: הנתברו לו סודות ספר הזוהר שבני אדם נחלקים זה אוסר בנה וזה אוסר בנה ור' משה עצמו נדר לי (?) לתת אלי ולא הסכים עד שמת ואמי ידע על כי אסמך ולדברי מי אמרין? ואמר דע באמת כי נתברר לי בלא ספק שמעולם לא בא לידי של ר' משה זה ואין בעולם ספר וזה ר' היה ר' משה בעל שם הנוהב ובכחו כתב כל מה שכתב בספר הזה ושה שמת נא במהרה דרך נתברר לי: דע כי ר' משה זה היה מסור גדול ומצאא בעין יפה מסוגו עד שהיה הזה ביתו כלא כסף והיה שנהנו לו העשירים המבינים בסודות נדולים אלא, אלו אשר תן להם כותבים בשם הכותב וכדור נתרקן כלו עד שצנן אשתו ובתו הנה ערומות שרירות ערעב ובצמא ובחוסר כל' וכששמענו שמת בעיר ארבלו ואקום ואליך אל העשיר הנדול אשר בעיר הזאת הנקרא ר' יוסף די אוילא ואומר לי: עתה הגיע הזמן אשר תוכה לספר הזוהר אשר לא יזכרו והג וזוכית אם תעשה את אשר איצרך' ועצתי היא זאת: שיקרא ר' יוסף זה לאשתו ואמר לה קחי נא סגולה זאת בד ששהקד ושלחי אותה לאשר ר' משה והתש כן: ויהי ממחרת ואמר עוד לה לבי נא ביתה אשר ר' משה ואמר לה דע כי רצוני הוא להשיא את בתיך לבני ואליך אל ידבר להם לאה ובני לבוש כל ימך ואין אני מבקשת ממך דבר בעולם רק ספר הזוהר אשר היה אישך מעתיק מסוגו ונתן לבני אדם דברים אלה האמרי לה לבד ולבהה לבד והשמיני את דבריהם אשר יענוה ונראה הדיו מכונים אם לאי' וחלך והתש כן' והגן אשת ר' משה והשגב לאשר ר' יוסף ואמר כה יעשה לי אלקים ומה יוסף אם מציגם ספר זה וזה עם אישי אבל מראשו ולבן מרשחו ושכלו כתב כל מה שנהני' ואומרה לו בראותי אותו כותב מבלידי דבר לפני: מדות האמר שאתה מעתיק מספר ואתה אין לך ספר רק מראשך ואתה כותב? הלא נאה לך לאמר כי משלך ואתה כותב ויותר וזה כבוד לך' ויפן אלי ואמר: אלו אודיע להם סודי זה שמסכילי אני כותב לא ישנחו בדברי ולא יתנו בעבורם פרוטה כי יאמרו כי מלבו הוא בנה ואתה אבל עתה נאמר שמיני ששהקד ספר הזוהר אשר חנר רשג' ברוח הקדש אני מעתיקם יקנו אותם בדמים קלים נאמר ענין ראות:

13. The *Sohar* contains whole passages which Moses de Leon translated into Aramaic, from his other works, as the learned Jellinek has demonstratively proved. To transfer these passages here would occupy too much of our space. We must, therefore, refer the reader to the monograph itself,<sup>33</sup> and shall only give one example, which the erudite historian, Dr. Graetz,<sup>34</sup> has pointed out. In his *Sephar Ha-Rimon* (ספר הרימון), which he composed A.D. 1827, and which is a Kabbalistic explanation of the Mosaic precepts, Moses de Leon endeavours to account for the non-occurrence of the Tetragrammaton in the history of the hexahemeron, whilst it does occur immediately afterwards, by submitting that as the earthly world is finite and perishable, this divine name, which denotes eternity, could not be used at the creation thereof; for if it had been created under its influence, the world would have been as imperishable as this name. In corroboration of this, Moses de Leon quotes the passage (לכו חזו מפעלות) (אלהים אשר שם שמות בארץ) *Come, behold the works of Elohim, what perishableness he made in the earth* (Ps. xli, 8), showing that שמות *destruction, perishableness*, is consonant with the name אלהים. In looking at the original, it will be seen that the text has יהוה and not אלהים, and that Moses de Leon, by a slip of memory, confounded this passage with (לכו וראו מפעלות אלהים) *Come and see the works of Elohim* (Ps. xli, 5). Now, the whole explanation and the same blunder are transferred into the *Sohar*. The commentators on this treasury of the Kabbalah, not knowing the cause of this blunder, express their great surprise that the *Sohar* should explain a mis-quotation. We subjoin the two passages in parallel columns.

<sup>33</sup> *Moses ben Schem-Tob de Leon, und sein Verhältniss zum Sohar*, von Adolph Jellinek. Leipzig, 1851, p. 21-36. Jellinek also gives additional information on this subject in his other contributions to the Kabbalah which will be found mentioned in the third part of this Essay.

<sup>34</sup> Comp. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, Leipzig, 1863, p. 498, where other facts are given, proving that Moses de Leon is the author of the *Sohar*.

*Sohar*, i, 58 a.      *Moses de Leon*, ii, No. 133, p. 25.

ר' יהודה פתח לכו דעו מַסְעוֹת אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר  
שֵׁם שְׁמוֹת וְנֹא' הָאֵי קָרָא אֱלֹהִים וְאַתְּמֵר . . .  
שְׁמוֹת דְּאֵי דָא שְׁמָא גִרִּים לִלְבָּא (לְשׁוֹן שְׁמִשׁוֹן)  
דְּאֵי הֵו מַסְעוֹת י' ד'ו'ה' שֵׁם קִיּוֹם בְּאַרְץ אַבְל  
בְּנֵי דְהוּן מַסְעוֹת שְׁמָא דְאֱלֹהִים שֵׁם שְׁמוֹת  
בְּאַרְץ: אֲמַר לֵיה' ר' חֵימָא וְנֹא'

אֲמַרְנָא כִּי יֵשׁ מִדְּרֹשׁ אֲחֵר כְּדִרְיוֹת שֵׁם הַמִּיחֻד  
נוֹכֵר בְּאַחֲרֹנָה לְקִיָּים עַל הַהוּיּוֹת אֲמַרְוּ חֻדַּל לִכּו  
רְאוּ מַסְעוֹת וְכו' מִשְׁנֵי שְׁדִּיּוֹ מַסְעוֹת אֱלֹהִים  
שֵׁם שְׁמוֹת . . . שְׁאֲלִמָּא הִיוּ מַסְעוֹת  
י'ה'ו'ה' שֵׁם קִיּוֹם בְּאַרְץ: הַזֵּנֵן בּוֹה עַל כָּל  
הַמַּסְעוֹת הֵו הַעוֹלָם הַשְּׁכָל כָּלָם וְפַסְרִים מִשְׁנֵי  
שְׁכָל הַהוּיּוֹת בְּשֵׁם הֵו שְׁאֲלִמָּא יֵהוּ בְּשֵׁם  
הַמִּיחֻד כָּלָם יֵהוּ קִיָּים בְּקִיּוֹם וְכו'

It is for these and many other reasons that the *Sohar* is now regarded by Steinschneider, Beer, Jellinek, Graetz, &c., as a pseudograph of the thirteenth century. That Moses de Leon should have palmed the *Sohar* upon Simon b. Jochai was nothing remarkable, since this Rabbi is regarded by tradition as the embodiment of mysticism. No better hero could be selected for the *Sohar* than R. Simon, of whom the Talmud gives us the following account: "Once upon a time, R. Jehudah, R. Jose, and R. Simon sat together, and R. Jehudah b. Gerim sat by them. R. Jehudah then began and said—How beautiful are the works of this nation (*i.e.*, the Romans)! they have erected market-places, they have erected bridges, and they have erected baths! R. Jose was quiet, but R. Simon b. Jochai answered and said: what they have built they have built for no one except for their own use, they made markets to allure prostitutes, they made baths to gratify themselves therein, and bridges to get tolls by them. Jehudah b. Gerim repeated this, and the emperor's government got to hear it, who passed the following decree: Jehudah, who exalted, is to be exalted; Jose, who was silent, is to be banished to Zipporis; and Simon, who spoke evil, is to be killed. He (*i.e.*, R. Simon) at once concealed himself with his son, in the place of study, whither his wife daily brought them a loaf and a flask of water; but as the rigour of the decree increased, he said to his son: women are weak-minded—if she is tortured she may betray us. Hence, they left, and betook themselves into a deep cavern, where by a miracle

a crab-tree and a well were created for their subsistence. He and his son sat in the sand up to their necks all the day studying the Law. They spent twelve long years in this cavern; when Elias the prophet came and stood at the entrance of the cavern, and called out—Who will inform the son of Jochai that the emperor is dead, and that the decree is commuted? They came out and saw the people tilling and sowing." (*Sabbath*, 33 a. Comp. also, *Jerusalem Shebiith*, ix, 1; *Bereshith Rabba*, cap. lxxix; *Midrash Koheleth*, x, 8; *Midrash Esther*, i, 9.) This is the secret why the story that R. Simon b. Jochai composed the *Sohar* during his twelve years' residence in the cavern obtained credence among the followers of the Kabbalah.

### III. *The Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth.*

It is this commentary to which we must look, as the most ancient document embodying the doctrines of the Kabbalah. The author of this commentary, R. Azariel b. Menachem, was born in Valladolid, about 1160. He distinguished himself as a philosopher, Kabbalist, Talmudist, and commentator, as his works indicate; he was a pupil of Isaac the Blind, who is regarded as the originator of the Kabbalah, and master of the celebrated R. Moses Nachmanides, who is also a distinguished pillar of Kabbalism. R. Azariel died A.D. 1238, at the advanced age of seventy-eight years. "The Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth" is in questions and answers,<sup>20</sup> and the following is the lucid analysis of it as given by the erudite Jellinek, according to Spinoza's form of Ethics.

<sup>20</sup>. עשר ספירות על דרך שאלה ותשובה *Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth, by way of Questions and Answers*. This commentary was first known through the Kabbalistic works of Meier Ibn Gabnai, entitled *דרך אמונה*, *The Path of Faith*, printed in Padua, 1563, and *עבודת הקדש*, *The Service of Holiness*, also called *סודות אלהים*, *The Vision of the Lord*, first printed in Mantua, 1545; then Venice, 1567, and Cracow, 1578. It was then published in Gabriel Warschawer's volume entitled *A Collection of Kabbalistic Treatises* (ספר לקוטים בקבלה), Warsaw, 1798; and has recently been published in Berlin, 1850. It is to this Berlin edition that the references in this Essay are made.

1. DEFINITION.—By the Being who is the cause and governor of all things, I understand the *En Soph*, i.e., a Being infinite, boundless, absolutely identical with itself, united in itself, without attributes, will, intention, desire, thought, word or deed. (Answers 2 and 4.)

2. DEFINITION.—By *Sephiroth* I understand the potencies which emanated from the absolute *En Soph*, all entities limited by quantity, which like the will, without changing its nature, wills diverse objects that are the possibilities of multifarious things. (Answers 3 and 9.)

i. PROPOSITION.—The primary cause and governor of the world is the *En Soph*, who is both immanent and transcendent. (Answer 1.)

(a) PROOF.—Each effect has a cause, and every thing which has order and design has a governor. (Answer 1.)

(b) PROOF.—Every thing visible has a limit, what is limited is finite, what is finite is not absolutely identical; the primary cause of the world is invisible, therefore unlimited, infinite, absolutely identical, i.e., he is the *En Soph*. (Answer 2.)

(c) PROOF.—As the primary cause of the world is infinite, nothing can exist *without* (EXTRA) him; hence he is immanent. (*Ibid.*)

*Scholion.*—As the *En Soph* is invisible and exalted, it is the root of both faith and unbelief. (*Ibid.*)

ii. PROPOSITION.—The *Sephiroth* are the medium between the absolute *En Soph* and the real world.

PROOF.—As the real world is limited and not perfect, it cannot directly proceed from the *En Soph*, still the *En Soph* must exercise his influence over it, or his perfection would cease. Hence the *Sephiroth*, which, in their intimate connection with the *En Soph*, are perfect, and in their severance are imperfect, must be the medium. (Answer 3.)

*Scholion.*—Since all existing things originated by means of



the *Sephiroth*, there are a higher, a middle, and a lower degree of the real world. (*Vide infra*, Proposition 6.)

iii. PROPOSITION.—There are ten intermediate *Sephiroth*.

PROOF.—All bodies have three dimensions, each of which repeats the other ( $3 \times 3$ ); and by adding thereunto space generally, we obtain the *number ten*. As the *Sephiroth* are the potencies of all that is limited they must be *ten*. (Answer 4).

(a) *Scholion*.—The number ten does not contradict the absolute unity of the *En Soph*, as *one* is the basis of all numbers, plurality proceeds from unity, the germs contain the development, just as fire, flame, sparks and colour have *one* basis, though they differ from one another. (Answer 6.)

(b) *Scholion*.—Just as cogitation or thought, and even the mind as a cogitated object, is limited, becomes concrete and has a measure, although *pure thought* proceeds from the *En Soph*; so limit, measure, and concretion are the attributes of the *Sephiroth*. (Answer 7.)

4. PROPOSITION.—The *Sephiroth* are emanations and not creations.

1. PROOF.—As the absolute *En Soph* is perfect, the *Sephiroth* proceeding therefrom must also be perfect; hence they are not created. (Answer 5.)

2. PROOF.—All created objects diminish by abstraction; the *Sephiroth* do not lessen, as their activity never ceases; hence they cannot be created. (*Ibid.*)

*Scholion*.—The first *Sephira* was in the *En Soph* as a power before it became a reality; then the second *Sephira* emanated as a potency for the intellectual world, and afterwards the other *Sephiroth* emanated for the sensuous and material world. This, however, does not imply a *prius* and *posterius* or a gradation in the *En Soph*, but just as a light whose kindled lights which shine sooner and later and variously, so it embraces all in a unity. (Answer 8.)

5. PROPOSITION.—The *Sephiroth* are both active and passive (מקביל ומתקבל).

PROOF.—As the *Sephiroth* do not set aside the unity of the *En Soph*, each one of them must receive from its predecessor, and impart to its successor—i.e., be receptive and imparting. (Answer 9.)

6. PROPOSITION.—The first *Sephira* is called *Inscrutable Height* (רום מעלה); the second, *Wisdom* (חכמה); the third, *Intelligence* (בינה); the fourth, *Love* (חסד); the fifth, *Justice* (פחד); the sixth, *Beauty* (תפארת); the seventh, *Firmness* (נצח); the eighth, *Splendour* (הוד); the ninth, *the Righteous is the Foundation of the World* (צדיק יסוד עולם); and the tenth, *Righteousness* (צדק).

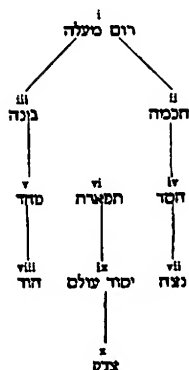
(a) *Scholion*.—The first three *Sephiroth* form the world of thought; the second three the world of soul; and the four last the world of body—thus corresponding to the intellectual, moral, and material worlds. (Answer 10.)

(b) *Scholion*.—The first *Sephira* stands in relation to the soul, inasmuch as it is called a *unity* (יחידה); the second, inasmuch as it is denominated *living* (חיה); the third, inasmuch as it is termed *spirit* (רוח); the fourth, inasmuch as it is called *vital principle* (נפש); the fifth, inasmuch as it is denominated *soul* (נשמה); the sixth operates on the blood, the seventh on the bones, the eighth on the veins, the ninth on the flesh, and the tenth on the skin. (*Ibid.*)

(c) *Scholion*.—The first *Sephira* is like the concealed light, the second like sky-blue, the third like yellow, the fourth like white, the fifth like red, the sixth like white-red, the seventh like whitish-red, the eighth like reddish-white, the ninth like white-red-whitish-red-reddish-white, and the tenth is like the light reflecting all colours.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The above analysis is taken from Dr. Jellinek's *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbalah. Erstes Heft. Leipzig, 1852*. This erudite scholar also gives some additional information on R. Azariel in the second part of his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbalah*, p. 32, &c. Leipzig, 1852.

The gradation of the *Sephiroth* is as follows—



For this date of the Kabbalah (*i.e.*, 1150-1190) we have the testimony of some of the earliest and most intelligent Kabbalists themselves. Thus R. Joseph b. Abraham Gikatilla (born about 1247, and died 1307) most distinctly tells us that R. Isaac the Blind, of Posquiers (flour. circa 1190-1210), the teacher of R. Azariel, was the first who taught the doctrines of this theosophy.<sup>22</sup> R. Bechja b. Asher, another Kabbalist who lived soon after this system was made known, in his commentary on the Pentateuch, which he composed A.D. 1291, styles R. Isaac the Blind, as *the Father of the Kabbalah*.<sup>23</sup> Shem Tob b. Abraham Ibn Gaon (born 1283), another ancient Kabbalist, in attempting to trace a Kabbalistic explanation of a passage in the Bible to its fountain head, goes back to R. Isaac as the primary source, and connects him immediately with the prophet Elias, who is said to have revealed the

22 וקבלה שבדינו על היות אלו החכמים משלשלת קבלת משה כרכבה מסיני עד עמוד הסיני  
 [שכפושקורש] החסיד ר' יצחק סני נהור בן הקדוש ר' אברהם שבנקש [שכפושקורש]  
 This passage from Gikatilla's ספר הנפש החכמה which is contained in Moses de Leon's ספר הזוהר is quoted by Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, p. 444.

23 Comp. Commentary on Pericope ed. Lemberg, 1811.

mysteries of this theosophy to this corypheus of the Kabbalah.<sup>24</sup> Whilst the author of the Kabbalistic work entitled *מערכת אלהות* the contemporary of R. Solomon b. Abraham b. Adereth (flour. A.D. 1260), frankly declares that "the doctrine of the *En Soph* and the *ten Sephiroth* is neither to be found in the Law, Prophets, or Hagiographa, nor in the writings of the Rabbins of blessed memory, but rests solely upon signs which are scarcely perceptible."<sup>25</sup>

It has indeed been supposed that covert allusions to the *Sephiroth* are to be found in the Talmud. If this could be proved, the date of the Kabbalah would have to be altered from the twelfth to the second or third century after Christ. An examination, however, of the passage in question, upon which this opinion is based, will show how thoroughly fanciful it is. The passage is as follows—"The Rabbins propound, At first the name of twelve letters was communicated to every one, but when the profane multiplied, it was only communicated to the most pious of the priests, and these pre-eminently pious priests absorbed it from their fellow priests in the chant. It is recorded that R. Tarphon said, I once went up the orchestra in the Temple after my maternal uncle, and, bending forward my ear to a priest, I heard how he absorbed it from his fellow priests in the chant. R. Jehudah said in the name of Rab, the divine name of forty-two letters is only communicated to such as are pious, not easily provoked, not given to drinking, and are not self opinionated. He who

24 In his Super-Commentary on Nachmanides' Treatise on Secrets, (סודות) entitled *ספר שם טוב* or *ספר שם טוב* (הר"ם מכן) remarks as follows *על אליות* [ראב"ד] יצחק בן יהודה *איש ספי איש עד ר' יצחק בן יהודה* In another Kabbalistic work, entitled *ברי הארץ ומגדל הנובל* which he completed at Taft in 1355, he says—*מגדל הנובל* חבור שירוש ההגדות על—*מגדל הנובל* These two works are still in MS, and the quotations are given in Cornuoly's *Itinéraires*, p. 276, and in Graetz's *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, p. 445.

25 *דף כ' האין סוף אשר זכרנו מינו רמח לא בתורה ולא בנביאים ולא בכתובים ולא בדברי ר"ל* *Comp. מערכת אלהות* cap. vii, 32 b, ed. Mantua, 1558.

knows this name and preserves it in purity, is beloved above, cherished below, respected by every creature, and is heir of both worlds—the world that now is, and the world to come.” (*Babylon Kiddushin*, 71 a.) Upon this the celebrated Maimonides (born 1135, died 1204) remarks—“ Now every-one who has any intelligence knows that the forty-two letters cannot possibly make one word, and that they must therefore have composed several words. There is no doubt that these words conveyed certain ideas, which were designed to bring man nearer to the true conception of the Divine essence, through the process we have already described. These words, composed of numerous letters, have been designated as a single name, because like all accidental proper names they indicate one single object ; and to make the object more intelligible several words are employed, as many words are sometimes used to express one single thing. This must be well understood, that they taught the ideas indicated by these names, and not the simple pronunciation of the meaningless letters. Neither the divine name composed of twelve letters, nor the one of forty-two letters, ever obtained the title of *Shem Ha-Mephorash*—this being the designation of the *particular name*, or the Tetragrammaton, as we have already propounded. As to the two former names, they assuredly convey a certain metaphysical lesson, and there is proof that one of them contained a lesson of this kind ; for the Rabbins say in the Talmud with regard to it: ‘ The name of forty-two letters is very holy, and is only communicated to such as are pious, &c., &c., &c.’ Thus far the Talmud. But how remote from the meaning of their author is the sense attached to these words ! Forsooth most people believe that it is simply by the pronunciation of the mere letters, without any idea being attached to them, that the sublime things are to be obtained, and that it is for them that those moral qualifications and that great preparation are requisite. But it is evident that

the design of all this is to convey certain metaphysical ideas which constitute the mysteries of the divine Law as we have already explained. It is shewn in the metaphysical Treatises that it is impossible to forget science—I speak of the perception of *the active intellect*—and this is the meaning of the remark in the Talmud, ‘he [to whom the divine name of forty-two letters is communicated] retains what he learns.’”<sup>26</sup>

It is this passage, as well as Maimonides' comment upon it, which led the erudite Franck to the conclusion that the mysteries of the Kabbalah were known to the doctors of the Talmud, and that the forty-two letters composing the divine name are *the ten Sephiroth*, which, by supplying the *Vav* conjunctive before the last *Sephiru*, consist exactly of forty-two letters, as follows :—

5 + 5 + 3 + 3 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 3 = 42  
 כתר חכמה בינה גדולה נבונה תפארת נצח הוד מלכות ויסוד

But Franck, like many other writers, confounds mysticism with Kabbalah. That the Jews had an extensive mysticism, embracing theosophy with its collateral angelology and uranology, as well as christology and magic, long before the development of the Kabbalah, and that there were a certain class of people who specially devoted themselves to the study of this mysticism, and who styled themselves “*Men of Faith*” (בעלי אמונות), is evident from a most cursory glance at the Jewish literature. Based upon the remark—“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant,” (Ps. xxv, 14,) some of the most distinguished Jewish doctors in the days of Christ, and afterwards, claimed an attainment of superhuman knowledge, communicated to them either by a voice from heaven (בת קול) or by Elias the prophet (*Baba Mezia*, 59 b; *Sabbath*, 77 b; *Chagiga*, 3 b, 10 a; *Sanhedrin*, 48 b; *Nidda*, 20 b; *Joma*, 9 b).

<sup>26</sup> Comp. *More Nebuchim*, part 1, cap. lxii.

The sages had also secret doctrines about the hexahemeron (מעשה בראשית) and the Vision of Ezekiel = Theosophy (מעשה מרכבה), "which were only communicated to presidents of courts of justice and those who were of a careful heart" (*Chagiga*, 12 a—16 a). Coeven with this are the mysteries connected with the different letters of the several divine names (*Kiddushin*, 71 a). Those who were deemed worthy to be admitted into these secrets could at any moment call into existence new creations either in the animal or vegetable kingdom (*Sanhedrin*, 65 b, 67 b; *Jerusalem Sanhedrin*, vii); they could fly in the air, heal the sick, drive out evil spirits, and suspend the laws of nature, by sundry mystical transpositions and commutations of the letters composing the divine names, which they wrote down on slips of vellum or pieces of paper and called "amulets" (קמיעות). This mysticism and the literature embodying it began to develop themselves more fully and to spread more extensively from the end of the eighth and the commencement of the ninth centuries. Towards the close of the eighth century came into existence

1. The celebrated mystical work entitled *the Alphabet of Rabbi Akiba*, which alternately treats each letter of the Hebrew Alphabet as representing an idea as an abbreviation for a word (נוטריקון), and as the symbol of some sentiment, according to its peculiar form, in order to attach to those letters moral, theosophic, angelological and mystical notions. This work has recently been reprinted in two recensions in Jellinek's *Beth Ha-Midrash*, vol. iii, p. 12—64, Leipzig, 1855.

2. The *Book of Enoch* which describes the glorification of Enoch and his transformation into the angel Metatron, regarding him as יר"ד הקטן *the Minor Deity*, in contradistinction to יר"ד הגדול *the Great God* and which was originally a constituent part of *the Alphabet of R. Akiba*. It is reprinted in Jellinek's *Beth Ha-Midrash*, vol. ii, pp. 114-117. Leipzig, 1853.

3. *Shiur Koma* (שיעור קומה), or *the Dimensions of the Deity*, which claims to be a revelation from the angel Metatron to R. Ishmael, and describes the size of the body and the sundry members of the Deity. It is given in the Book Razel (ספר רזיאל) of Eleazer b. Jehudah of Worms, printed at Amsterdam, 1701, and at Warsaw, 1812.

4. *The Palaces* (היכלות). This mystical document opens with an exaltation of those who are worthy to see the chariot throne (צפיית המרכבה), declaring that they know whatever happens, and whatever is about to happen in the world; that he who offends them will be severely punished; and that they are so highly distinguished as not to be required to rise before any one except a king, a high priest, and the Sanhedrim. It then celebrates the praises of Almighty God and his chariot throne; describes the dangers connected with seeing this chariot throne (מרכבה); gives an episode from the history of the martyrs and the Roman emperor Lupinus, a description of the angels, and of the sundry formulæ wherewith they are adjured. Whereupon follows a description of the seven heavenly palaces, each of which is guarded by eight angels, and into which the student of the mysterious chariot throne may transpose himself in order to learn all mysteries, a description of the formulæ by virtue of which these angelic guards are obliged to grant admission into the celestial palaces, and of the peculiar qualifications of those who desire to enter into them. The document then concludes with detailing some hymns of praise, a conversation between God, Israel, and the angels about those mysteries, a knowledge of which makes man suddenly learned without any trouble, and with a description of this mystery, which consists in certain prayers and charms. This mystical production has also been reprinted in Jellinek's valuable *Beth Ha-Midrash*, vol. iii, pp. 83-108.

These mystical treatises constitute the centre around which



cluster all the productions of this school, which gradually came into existence in the course of time. So numerous became the disciples of mysticism in the twelfth century, and so general became the belief in their power of performing miraculous cures, driving out evil spirits, &c., &c., by virtue of charms consisting of the letters composing the divers divine names transposed and commuted in mystical forms, that the celebrated Maimonides found it necessary to denounce the system. "We have one divine name only," says he, "which is not derived from His attributes, viz., the Tetragrammaton, for which reason it is called *Shem Ha-Mephorash* (שם המפורש). Believe nothing else, and give no credence to the nonsense of the writers of charms and amulets (כותבי הקמיעות), to what they tell you or to what you find in their foolish writings about the divine names, which they invent without any sense, calling them appellations of the Deity (שמות), and affirming that they require holiness and purity and perform miracles. All these things are fables: a sensible man will not listen to them, much less believe in them." (*More Nebuchim*, i, 61.)

But this mysticism, with its thaumaturgy, though espoused by later Kabbalists and incorporated into their writings, is perfectly distinct from the Kabbalah in its first and pure form, and is to be distinguished by the fact that it has no system, knows nothing of the speculations of *the En Soph*, *the ten Sephiroth*, the doctrine of emanations, and the four worlds, which are the essential and peculiar elements of the Kabbalah. As to Franck's ingenious hypothesis, based upon the same number of letters constituting a divine name, mentioned in the Talmud, and the *ten Sephiroth*, we can only say that the Kabbalists themselves never claimed this far-fetched identity, and that Ignatz Stern has shown (*Ben Chananja*, iii, p. 261), that the *Sohar* itself takes the ten divine names mentioned in the Bible, which it enumerated in vol. iii, 11 a, and which

it makes to correspond to the *ten Sephiroth*, to be the sacred name composed of forty-two letters, viz. :—

$4 + 2 + 2 + 5 + 4 + 5 + 2 + 5 + 2 + 4 + 3 + 4 = 42$   
 אהיה אשר אהיה יה יריד אל אלדים ירד צבאות אל די אדני

Having ascertained its *date*, we now come to the *origin* of the Kabbalah. Nothing can be more evident than that the cardinal and distinctive tenets of the Kabbalah in its original form, as stated at the beginning of the second part of this Essay, are derived from Neo-Platonism. Any doubt upon this subject must be relinquished when the two systems are compared. The very expression *En Soph* (אין סוף) which the Kabbalah uses to designate the Incomprehensible One, is foreign, and is evidently an imitation of the Greek *ἄπειρος*. The speculations about *the En Soph*, that he is superior to actual being, thinking and knowing, are thoroughly Neo-Platonic (*ἐπέκεινα οὐσίας, ἐνεργίας, νοῦ καὶ νοήσεως*); and R. Azariel, whose work, as we have seen, is the first Kabbalistic production, candidly tells us that in viewing the Deity as purely negative, and divesting him of all attributes, he followed the opinion of the philosophers.<sup>27</sup> When R. Azariel moreover tells us that “the *En Soph* can neither be comprehended by the intellect, nor described in words; for there is no letter or word which can grasp him,” we have here almost the very words of Proclus, who tells us that, “although he is generally called the unity (*τὸ ἓν*) or the first, it would be better if no name were given him; for there is no word which can depict his nature—he is (*ἀῤῥήτος, ἀγνωστός*), the inexpressible, the unknown.” (*Theol. Plat.* ii, 6.)

The Kabbalah propounds that the *En Soph*, not being an object of cognition, made his existence known in the creation of the world by *the Sephiroth*, or *Emanations*, or *Intelligences*.

<sup>27</sup> וחכמי המחקר מודים בדבר ואומרים כי אין השתנו כי אם על דרך לא *Commentary on the ten Sephiroth*, 2 a.

So Neo-Platonism. The *Sephiroth* are divided in the Kabbalah into a trinity of triads respectively denominated עולם השכל *the Intellectual World*, עולם הנפש *the Sensuous World*, and עולם הטבע *the Material World*, which exactly corresponds to the three triads of Neo-Platonism νοῦς, ψύχη, and φύσις. The Kabbalah teaches that these *Sephiroth* are both infinite and perfect, and finite and imperfect, in so far as the source from which they emanate imparts or withholds his fulness from them. Neo-Platonism also teaches that "every emanation, though less perfect than that from which it emanates, has yet a similarity with it, and, so far as this similarity goes, remains in it, departing from it so far as it is unlike, but as far as possible being one with it and remaining in it."<sup>28</sup> Even the comparison between the emanation of *the Sephiroth* from *the En Soph*, and the rays proceeding from light to describe the immanency and perfect unity of the two, is the same as the Neo-Platonic figure employed to illustrate the emanations from one principium (ὅλον ἐκ φωτὸς τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ περιλαμψιν).

<sup>28</sup> Proclus, *Inst. Theol.* 7, 31; Smith, *Dictionary of Roman and Greek Biography and Mythology*, s.v. PROCLUS.

### III.

It now remains for us to describe the development of the Kabbalah, to point out the different schools into which its followers are divided, and to detail the literature which this theosophy called into existence in the course of time. The limits of this Essay demand that this should be done as briefly as possible.

The great land mark in the development of the Kabbalah is the birth of *the Sohar*, which divides the history of this theosophy into two periods, viz., the pre-*Sohar* period and the post-*Sohar* period. During these two periods different schools developed themselves, which are classified by the erudite historian, Dr. Graetz, as follows :—<sup>1</sup>

I.—THE SCHOOL OF GERONA, so called from the fact that the founders of it were born in this place and established the school in it. To this school, which is the cradle of the Kabbalah, belong

1. Isaac the Blind (flour. 1190-1210), denominated the Father of the Kabbalah. His productions have become a prey to time, and only a few fragments have survived as quotations in other theosophic works. From these we learn that he espoused the despised doctrine of metempsychosis as an article of creed, and that from looking into a man's face, he could tell whether the individual possessed a new soul from the celestial world of spirits, or whether he had an old soul which has been migrating from body to body and has still to accomplish its purity before its return to rest in its heavenly home.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, p. 110, &c.

2. Azariel and Ezra, disciples of Isaac the Blind. The former of these is the author of the celebrated *Commentary on the Ten Sephiroth*, which is the first Kabbalistic production, and of which we have given an analysis in the second part of this Essay (*vide supra*, p. 176). Of Ezra next to nothing is known beyond the fact that his great intimacy with Azariel led some writers to identify the two names.

3. Jehudah b. Jakar, a contemporary of the foregoing Kabbalists. No works of his have survived, and he is only known as the teacher of the celebrated Nachmanides and from being quoted as a Kabbalistic authority.

4. Moses Nachmanides, born in Gerona about 1195, the pupil of Azariel, Ezra, and Jehudah Ibn Jakar. It was the conversion of this remarkable and famous Talmudist to this newly-born Kabbalah which gave to it an extraordinary importance and rapid spread amongst the numerous followers of Nachmanides. It is related that, notwithstanding all the efforts of his teachers, Nachmanides at first was decidedly adverse to this system; and that one day the Kabbalist who most exerted himself to convert him was caught in a house of ill fame and condemned to death. He requested Nachmanides to visit him on the Sabbath, being the day fixed for his execution; and when Nachmanides reproved him for his sins, the Kabbalist declared that he was innocent, and that he would appear at his house on this very day, after the execution, and partake with him the Sabbath meal. He proved true to his promise, as by means of the Kabbalistic mysteries he effected that, and an ass was executed in his stead, and he himself was suddenly transposed into Nachmanides' house. From that time Nachmanides avowed himself a disciple of the Kabbalah, and was initiated into its mysteries.<sup>2</sup> His numerous writings, an account of which will be found in Alexander's edition of

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Ibn Jachja, *Shalsheth Ha-Kabbalah*; Grætz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vii, 88, &c.



viz.—*Atzilah*, *Beriah*, *Jetzira* and *Asiah*, corresponding to the Tetragrammaton יהוה. In the *Atzilatic luminous world* is the divine majesty, the Shechinah. In the *Briatic world* are the souls of the saints, all the blessings, the throne of the Deity, he who sits on it in the form of Achtenal (the crown of God, the first *Sephira*), and the seven different luminous and splendid regions. In the *Jetziratic world* are the sacred animals from the vision of Ezekiel, the ten classes of angels with their princes, who are presided over by the fiery Metatron, the spirits of men, and the accessory work of the divine chariot. In the *Asiatic world* are the Ophanim, the angels who receive the prayers, who are appointed over the will of man, who control the action of mortals, who carry on the struggle against evil, and who are presided over by the angelic prince Synandelphon. IV. The world was founded in wisdom and understanding (Prov. iii, 19), and God in his knowledge originated fifty gates of understanding. V. God created the world by means of the *ten Sephiroth*, which are both the agencies and qualities of the Deity. The *ten Sephiroth* are called Crown, Wisdom, Intelligence, Mercy, Fear, Beauty, Victory, Majesty and Kingdom: they are ideal and stand above the concrete world."<sup>4</sup>

6. Jacob ben Sheshet of Gerona (flour. 1243). He wrote a Kabbalistic Treatise in rhymed prose, entitled שער השמים *the Gate of Heaven*, after Gen. xxviii, 17. It was first published by Gabriel Warshawer in his collection of eight Kabbalistic Essays, called ספר לקוטים בקבלה. Warsaw, 1798. It forms the third Essay in this collection, and is erroneously entitled לקוטי שם טוב *the Collection of Shem Tob*. It has now been published under its proper title, from a codex by

<sup>4</sup> This remarkable Treatise was first published by R. Abraham, Vilna, 1802; it was then reprinted with all its faults in Leunberg, 1850. The erudite and indefatigable Dr. Jellinek has now reprinted it in his *Auswahl kabbalistischer Mystik*, part i, Leipzig, 1853, and the above analysis is from the Introduction to this excellent edition.

Mordecai Mortera, in the Hebrew Essays and Reviews, entitled *Ozar Nechmad* (אוצר נחמד) vol. iii, p. 153, &c. Vienna, 1860.

The characteristic feature of this school, which is the creative school, is that it for the first time established and developed the doctrine of the *En Soph* (אין סוף) the *Sephiroth* (ספירות) or *Emanations*, metempsychosis (סוד העבור) with the doctrine of retribution (סוד הנמול) belonging thereto, and a peculiar christology, whilst the Kabbalistic mode of exegesis is still subordinate in it.

II.—THE SCHOOL OF SEGOVIA, so called because it was founded by Jacob of Segovia, and its disciples were either natives of this place or lived in it. The chief representatives of this school are—

1, Isaac, and 2, Jacob, junior, the two sons of Jacob Segovia, and 3, Moses b. Simon of Burgos, who are only known by sundry fragments preserved in Kabbalistic writings.

4. Todras b. Joseph Ha-Levi Abulafia, born 1234, died circa 1305. This celebrated Kabbalist occupied a distinguished position as physician and financier in the court of Sancho IV, King of Castile, and was a great favourite of Queen Maria de Moline; he formed one of the *cortége* when this royal pair met Philip IV, the *Fair*, King of France in Bayonne (1290), and his advocacy of this theosophy secured for the doctrines of the Kabbalah a kindly reception. His works on the Kabbalah are—(a) An Exposition of the Talmudic Hagadoth, entitled *אוצר הכבוד*, (b) A Commentary on Ps. xix, and (c) A Commentary on the Pentateuch, in which he propounds the tenets of the Kabbalah. These works, however, have not as yet been printed.<sup>5</sup>

5. Shem Tob b. Abraham Ibn Gaon, born 1283, died circa 1332, who wrote many Kabbalistic works.

6. Isaac of Akko (flour. 1290) author of the Kabbalistic

<sup>5</sup> Steinschneider, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodliciana*, 2677-2680. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vii, 218, &c.



Commentary on the Pentateuch, entitled *מאירת עינים* not yet printed, with the exception of an extract published by Jellinek.<sup>6</sup>

The characteristic of this school is that it is devoted to exegesis, and its disciples endeavoured to interpret the Bible and the Hagada in accordance with the doctrines of the Kabbalah.

III.—THE QUASI-PHILOSOPHIC SCHOOL of Isaac b. Abraham Ibn Latif, or Allatif. He was born about 1270 and died about 1390. Believing that to view Judaism from an exclusively philosophical stand-point does not shew "the right way to the sanctuary," he endeavoured to combine philosophy with Kabbalah. "He laid greater stress than his predecessors on the close connection and intimate union between the spiritual and material world, between the Creator and the creation—God is in all and everything is in him. The human soul rises to the world-soul in earnest prayer, and unites itself therewith 'in a kiss, operates upon the Deity and brings down a divine blessing upon the nether world. But as every mortal is not able to offer such a spiritual and divinely operative prayer, the prophets, who were the most perfect men, had to pray for the people, for they alone knew the power of prayer. Isaac Allatif illustrated the unfolding and self-revelation of the Deity in the world of spirits by mathematical forms. The mutual relation thereof is the same as that of the point extending and thickening into a line, the line into the flat, the flat into the expanded body. Henceforth the Kabbalists used points and lines in their mystical diagrams as much as they employed the numerals and letters of the alphabet."<sup>7</sup>

IV. THE SCHOOL OF ABULAFIA, founded by Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia, is represented by—

<sup>6</sup> Comp. *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala*, von Adolph Jellinek, part ii, Leipzig, 1852, p. xiii, &c.

<sup>7</sup> Comp. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, p. 221, &c.

1. Abulafia, the founder of it, who was born at Saragossa in 1240, and died circa 1292. For thirty years he devoted himself to the study of the Bible, the Talmud, philology, philosophy, and medicine, making himself master of the philosophical writings of Saadia, Bachja b. Joseph, Maimonides, and Antoli, as well as of the Kabbalistic works which were then in existence. Finding no comfort in philosophy, he gave himself entirely to the mysteries of the Kabbalah in their most fantastic extremes, as the ordinary doctrine of the *Sephiroth* did not satisfy him. The ordinary doctrine of the *Sephiroth* he simply regarded as a *ten unity* instead of the Christian *three unity*. Through divine inspiration, he discovered a higher Kabbalah, by means of which the soul can not only hold the most intimate communion with the world-soul, but obtain the prophetic faculty. The simple intercourse with the world of spirits, which is effected by separating the words of Holy Writ, and especially those of the divine name, into letters, and by regarding each letter as a distinct word (נוטריקון), or by transposing the component parts of words in every possible way to obtain thereby peculiar expressions (צירוף), or by taking the letters of each word as numerals (נמטריא), is not sufficient. To have the prophetic faculty and to see visions ought to be the chief aim, and these are secured by leading an ascetic life, by banishing all worldly feelings, by retiring into a quiet closet, by dressing oneself in white apparel, by putting on the fringed garment and the phylacteries; by sanctifying the soul so as to be fit to hold converse with the Deity; by pronouncing the letters composing the divine name with certain modulations of the voice and divine pauses; by exhibiting the divine names in various diagrams under divers energetic movements, turnings, and bendings of the body, till the voice gets confused and the heart is filled with fervour. When one has gone through these practices and is in such a condition, the fulness of the

Godhead is shed abroad in the human soul: the soul then unites itself with the divine soul in a kiss, and prophetic revelations follow as a matter of course.

He went to Italy, published, in Urbino (1279), a prophecy, in which he records his conversations with the Deity, calling himself Raziel and Zechariah, because these names are numerically the same as his own name, Abraham,<sup>8</sup> and preached the doctrines of the Kabbalah. In 1281 he had a call from God to convert the Pope, Martin IV, to Judaism, for which he was thrown into prison, and narrowly escaped a martyr's death by fire. Seeing that his Holiness refused to embrace the Jewish religion, Abulafia went to Sicily, accompanied by several of his disciples. In Messina another revelation from God was vouchsafed to him, announcing to him that he was the Messiah, which he published 1284. This apocalypse also announced that the restoration of Israel would take place in 1296; and so great was the faith which the people reposed in it, that thousands prepared themselves for returning to Palestine. Those, however, who did not believe in the Messiahship and in the Kabbalah of Abulafia, raised such a violent storm of opposition against him, that he had to escape to the island of Comino, near Malta (*circa* 1288), where he remained for some time, and wrote sundry Kabbalistic works.

His Kabbalistic system may be gathered from the following analysis of his Rejoinder to R. Solomon ben Abraham ben Adereth, who attacked his doctrines and Messianic as well as prophetic pretensions. "There are," says Abulafia, "four sources of knowledge—I, The five senses, or experimental maxims; II, Abstract numbers or *à priori* maxims; III, The generally acknowledged maxims, or *consensus communis*;

<sup>8</sup> This will be seen from the reduction of the respective names to their numerical value by the rule *Gematria*, viz.:—5 30 + א 1 + י 10 + י 7 200 = 248;

16 + ה 5 + י 10 + 200 + כ 30 + 7 = 248;

and ט 40 + ה 5 + 200 + ב 2 + א 1 = 248.

and IV, Transmitted doctrines or traditional maxims. The Kabbalistic tradition, which goes back to Moses, is divisible into two parts, the first of which is superior to the second in value, but subordinate to it in the order of study. The first part is occupied with the knowledge of the Deity, obtained by means of the doctrine of *the Sephiroth*, as propounded in the *Book Jetzira*. The followers of this part are related to those philosophers who strive to know God from his works, and the Deity stands before them objectively as a light beaming into their understanding. These, moreover, give to *the Sephiroth* sundry names to serve as signs for recognition; and some of this class differ but little from Christians, inasmuch as they substitute a *decade* for the *triad*, which they identify with God, and which they learned in the school of Isaac the Blind.

The second and more important part strives to know God by means of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet, from which, together with the vowel points and accents, those sundry divine names are combined, which elevate the Kabbalists to the degree of prophecy, drawing out their spirit, and causing it to be united with God and to become one with the Deity. This is gradually effected in the following manner. The *ten Sephiroth* sublimates gradually to the upper *Sephira*, called *thought*, *crown*, or *primordial air*, which is the root of all the other *Sephiroth*, and reposes in the creative *En Soph*. In the same manner all the numerals are to be traced back to one, and all the trees, together with their roots and branches, are converted into their original earth as soon as they are thrown into the fire. To the *ten Sephiroth*, consisting of upper, middle and lower, correspond the letters of the alphabet, which are divided into three rows of ten letters each, the final letters inclusive, beginning and ending with *Aleph*; as well as the human body, with its head, the two arms, loins, testicles, liver, heart, brain, all of which unite into a higher unity and become one in the active *voûc*, which in its

turn again unites itself with God, as the unity to which everything must return.

The *ten Sephiroth* are after a higher conception, to be traced to a higher triad, which correspond to the letters *Aleph, Beth, Gimmel*, and the three principles combined in man, the vital in the heart, the vegetable in the liver, and the pleasurable in the brain, and also form themselves in a higher unity. It is in this way that the Kabbalist who is initiated into the *prophetic Kabbalah* may gradually concentrate all his powers direct to one point to God, and unite himself with the Deity, for which purpose the ideas developed in unbroken sequence, from the permutations of numbers and letters, will serve him as steps upon which to ascend to God."<sup>9</sup>

Abulafia wrote no less than twenty-six grammatical, exegetical, mystical and Kabbalistic works, and twenty-two prophetic treatises. And though these productions are of great importance to the history of the literature and development of the Kabbalah, yet only two of them, viz., the above-named *Epistle to R. Solomon* and the *Epistle to R. Abraham*, entitled *the Seven Paths of the Law* (שבע נתיבות התורה), have as yet been published.

2. Joseph Gikatilla b. Abraham (flour. 1260), disciple of Abulafia. He wrote in the interests and defence of this school the following works:—i. A Kabbalistic work entitled *the Garden of Nuts* (גנת אֵנוֹחַ), consisting of three parts, and treating respectively on the import of the divine names, on the mysteries of the Hebrew letters, and on the vowel points. It was published at Hanau, 1615. ii. The import of the vowel points entitled *the Book on Vowels* (ספר הניקוד), or *the Gate to the Points* (שער הניקוד), published in the collection of seven treatises, called *the Cedars of Lebanon*

<sup>9</sup> This Epistle of Abulafia has been published by Jellinek in his *Auswahl kabbalistischer Mystik*, part i, p. 13, &c., Leipzig, 1853, who also gives the above analysis, which we have translated as literally as possible.

(ארי לבנו), Venice, 1601, and Cracow, 1648, of which it is the third treatise. iii. *The Mystery of the Shining Metal* (סוד החשמל), being a Kabbalistic exposition of the first chapter of Ezekiel, also published in the preceding seven treatises, of which it is the fourth. iv. *The Gate of Light* (שער אורה), being a treatise on the names of the Deity and the *ten Sephiroth*, first published in Mantua, 1561; then Riva de Trento, 1561; Cracow, 1600. A Latin version of it by Knorr von Rosenroth is given in the first part of the *Cabbala Denudata*, Sulzbach, 1677-78. v. *The Gates of Righteousness* (שערי צדק), on the ten divine names answering to the *ten Sephiroth*, published at Riva de Trento, 1561. vi. *Mysteries* (סודות) connected with sundry Pentateuchal ordinances, published by Jechiel Ashkenazi in his *Temple of the Lord* (היכל יהוה), Venice and Dantzic, 1596-1606.<sup>10</sup>

From the above description it will be seen that the characteristic features of this school are the stress which its followers lay on the extensive use of the exegetical rules called *Gematria* (גמטריא), *Notaricon* (נוטריקון), and *Ziruph* (צירוף), in the exposition of the divine names and Holy Writ, as well as in the claim to prophetic gifts. It must, however, be remarked that in this employment of commutations, permutations and reduction of each letter in every word to its numerical value, Abulafia and his followers are not original.

V. THE SOHAR SCHOOL, which is a combination and absorption of the different features and doctrines of all the previous schools, without any plan or method.

1236-1315. Less than a century after its birth the Kabbalah became known among Christians through the restless efforts of Raymond Lully, the celebrated scholastic metaphysician and experimental chemist. This *Doctor illuminatus*, as he was styled, in consequence of his great learning and

<sup>10</sup> Comp. Jellinek, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala*, part ii, p. 60, &c.; Steinschneider, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, Col. 1461-1470.

piety, was born about 1296 at Palma, in the island of Majorca. He relinquished the military service and writing erotic poetry when about thirty, and devoted himself to the study of theology. Being inspired with an ardent zeal for the conversion of the Mohammedans and the Jews to Christianity, he acquired a knowledge of Arabic and Hebrew for this purpose. In pursuing his Hebrew studies Lully became acquainted with the mysteries of the Kabbalah, and, instead of converting his Kabbalistic teachers, he embraced the doctrine of "the identity of the Deity and nature;"<sup>11</sup> and there is very little doubt that the Kabbalistic method of palming their notions on the text of Scripture, by means of the *Gematria*, *Notaricon* and *Ziruph*, suggested to him the invention of the *Great Art* (ARS MAGNA). It is therefore not to be wondered at that he had the loftiest conception of the Kabbalah, that he regarded it as a divine science and as a genuine revelation whose light is revealed to a rational soul.<sup>12</sup> It cannot be said that Lully derived as much benefit from the Mohammedans, for after making three perilous journeys to Africa to bring the sons of Ishmael to the truth of Christianity, he was stoned to death by them, June 30, 1315.

The new era in the development of the Kabbalah, created by the appearance of the *Sohar*, has continued to the present day, for nearly all those who have since espoused the doctrines of this theosophy have made the *Sohar* their text-book, and the principal writers have contented themselves more or less with writing commentaries on this gigantic pseudonym.

1290-1350. Foremost among these is Menahem di Recanti, who was born in Recanti (Latin Recinetum) about 1290. He wrote, when about forty years of age (1330), a commentary

11 Comp. Tennemann, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. viii. p. 837.

12 Dicitur haec doctrina Kabbala quod idem est secundum Hebraeos ut receptio veritatis cujuslibet rei divinitus revelatae animae rationali. . . . Est igitur Kabbala habitus animae rationalis ex recta ratione divinarum rerum cognitivus; propter quod est de maximo etiam divino consuetudine divina scientia vocari debet. Comp. *De Auditu Kabbalistico, sive ad omnes scientias introdutorium*. Strasburg, 1651.

on the Pentateuch, which is little else than a commentary on the *Sohar*. This commentary—which was first published by Jacob b. Chajim in Bomberg's celebrated printing establishment, Venice, 1523, then again, *ibid*, 1545, and in Lublin, 1595—has been translated into Latin by the famous Pico della Mirandola.<sup>13</sup>

1320. At the beginning of the fourteenth century Joseph b. Abraham Ibn Wakkar (flour. 1290-1340) endeavoured to reconcile this theosophy with philosophy, and to this end wrote a Treatise on the cardinal doctrines of the Kabbalah, which is regarded as one of the best if not the best introductory compendium. This production, which is unpublished, and a MS. of which exists in the Bodleian Library (Codex Laud. 119 ; described by Uri No. 384), consists of four parts or *Gates*, subdivided into chapters, as follows :—

GATE I, which is entitled, *On the views of the Kabbalists respecting the Primary Cause, blessed be he, and the Sephiroth, as well as their names and order*, consists of eight chapters, treating respectively on the fundamental doctrines of the emanations of the *Sephiroth* from the First Cause, as transmitted from Abraham and indicated in the Bible and the Rabbinic writings in *Gematrias* (cap. i) ; on the unity of the *Sephiroth* (cap. ii) ; the relation of the *Sephiroth* to each other, the First Cause itself being a trinity consisting of a threefold light, the number of the *Sephiroth* being from 10, 20, 30 and so on up to 310, stating that there is a difference of opinion amongst the Kabbalists whether the Primary Cause is within or without the *Sephiroth* (cap. iii) ; on the three worlds of the *Sephiroth* (cap. iv) ; on the beginninglessness of the first and necessary first Emanation, investigating the question as to how many *Sephiroth* this property extends (cap. v) ; on

<sup>13</sup> For the other works of Recanti, both published and unpublished, as well as for the exact date of his literary labours, we must refer to Steinschneider, *Catologus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, Col. 1733-1737 ; and to Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, vol. iii, pp. 135, 136.



the subordination and order of the *Sephiroth* and the diagrams, mentioning, in addition to the three known ones, the figure of bridegroom and bride under the nuptial canopy (cap. vi) ; on the names of the Deity and the angels derived from the *Sephiroth* (cap. vii) ; on the unclean (demon) *Sephiroth* or Hells (קליפות) and their relation to the pure ones (cap. viii).

GATE II, which is entitled, *On the influence of the Sephiroth on the government of the world (Providence)*, consists of six chapters, treating respectively on the relation of the *Sephiroth* to the fundamental characteristics of Providence, such as mercy, justice, &c. (cap. i) ; on the corresponding relations of the unclean *Sephiroth* (cap. ii) ; on the influence of the *Sephiroth* on men, especially on the Hebrew race, and their vicissitudes (caps. iii and iv) ; on the possibility of the *Sephiroth* withholding this influence (cap. v) ; and on the relation of the *Sephiroth* to the days of the week (cap. vi).

GATE III, which is entitled, *On the names of the Sephiroth among the Kabbalists*, and which is the most extensive part of the work, consists of seven chapters, treating respectively on the names of the Deity, giving the sundry explanations of אלהים אשר אלהים current among the Jewish philosophers (cap. 1) ; on the names of the *Sephiroth*, stating that there is no uniform principle among the Kabbalists ; that the appellations are derived from the Bible, the Talmud and later literati ; that the greatest difference of opinion prevails among the Kabbalists as to the mode in which these ancient sources are to be interpreted, recommending the following works as reliable guides : the Talmud, Midrash Rabboth, Siphra, Siphri, Bahir, Perakim of R. Eliezer, the opinions of Nachmanides and Todros Ha-Levi Abulafia of honoured memory, but guarding against the *Sohar*, because "*many blunders occur therein* (cap. ii) ; on the import of the names of the *Sephiroth*, with examples of interpretation of the Bible and Talmud

to serve as aids for the student who is to prosecute the work according to these examples, mentioning three explanations of the word *Sephira* (cap. iii) ; on the divine names occurring in the Pentateuch (cap. iv) ; on the masculine and feminine nature of the *Sephiroth* (cap. v) ; this is followed (cap. vi) by an alphabetical dictionary of the names of the *Sephiroth*, giving under each letter the Biblical and the corresponding Talmudic appellation appropriated by the Kabbalists to the *Sephiroth* ; and (cap. vii) by an index of the names of each *Sephira* in alphabetical order without any explanation.

GATE IV, which is entitled *On the positive proofs of the existence of the Kabbalah*, describes the author's own views of the Kabbalistic system, and submits that the Kabbalist has a preference over the philosopher and astronomer by virtue of the acknowledged maxim that he has a thorough knowledge of a thing who knows most details about it. Now the Kabbalists build their system upon the distinction of words, letters, &c., &c., in the sacred writings ; and they also explain certain formularies among the Rabbins, which have undoubtedly a recondite sense.<sup>14</sup>

1370-1500. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Kabbalah took deep root in Spain. Its followers, who were chiefly occupied with the study of *the Sohar*, with editing some older works, and with writing Kabbalistic commentaries on the Bible, became more and more aggressive, denouncing in unmeasured terms their co-religionists who could not see the advantages of this secret doctrine. Thus Abraham b. Isaac of Granada—who wrote (1391-1409) a Kabbalistic work entitled *The Covenant of Peace*, discussing

<sup>14</sup> The MS. of Ibn Wakkar's Treatise is minutely described by Uri (No 384). It is written in a character resembling the later German Hebrew, is furnished with references to the passages in the Bible and verbal translations in Latin, and contains such clerical blunders as no Hebrew copyist would commit. The above analysis of it is taken from the article in *Ersch und Gruber's Allgemeine Encyclopædie*, section ii, vol. xxxi, p. 100, &c., written by the erudite Steinschneider. For the other Kabbalistic works of Ibn Wakkar we must refer to the same elaborate article.

the mysteries of the names of God and the angels, of permutations, commutations, the vowel points and accents—declares that he who does not acknowledge God in the manner of the Kabbalah sins unwittingly, is not regarded by God, has not his special providence, and, like the abandoned and the wicked, is left to fate.<sup>15</sup>

Similar in import and tone are the writings of Shem Tob Ibn Shem Tob (died 1430). In his Treatise, entitled *the Book of Faithfulness*, which is an attack on the Jewish philosophers Ibn Ezra, Maimonides, Levi b. Gershon, &c., and a defence of the Kabbalah, Shem Tob denounces the students of philosophy as heretics, and maintains that the salvation of Israel depends upon the Kabbalah. He also wrote Homilies on the Pentateuch, the Feasts and Fasts, &c., in which the Kabbalistic doctrines are fully propounded.<sup>16</sup>

Moses Botarel or Botarelo, also a Spaniard, wrote at this time (1409) his commentary on the famous *Book Jetzira*, an analysis of which is given in the foregoing part of this Essay (*vide supra*, p. 147, &c.) Unlike Abraham of Granada and Shem Tob, his two contemporary champions of the Kabbalah, he praises philosophy, speaks of Aristotle as of a prophet, and maintains that philosophy and the Kabbalah propound exactly the same doctrines, and that they only differ in language and in technical terms. In this commentary, which he wrote to instruct the Christian scholar Maestro Juan in the Kabbalah, Botarel shows how, by fasting, ablations, prayer, invocation of divine and angelic names, a man may have such dreams as shall disclose to him the secrets of the future. In confirmation of his opinions he quotes such ancient authorities as Rab Ashi, Saadia Gaon, Hai Gaon, &c., whom the Kabbalah claims as its great

<sup>15</sup> This *ספר ספרי* has been published in Amsterdam, 1648.

<sup>16</sup> The *ספר אמונות* consists of eleven parts, subdivided into chapters, and was published in Ferrara, 1557; the Homilies, entitled *דרשות על דתורה* were first published in Venice, 1547, and then in Padua, 1567.

pillars.<sup>17</sup> It is almost needless to remark that these men lived long before the birth of the Kabbalah, and that this mode of palming comparatively modern opinions upon great men of remote ages, has also been adopted by advocates of other systems who were anxious to invest their views with the halo of antiquity.

As countrymen of the foregoing writers, and as exponents of the opinions of older Kabbalists, are to be mentioned—

(i) Jehudah Chajath who was among the large number of Jews expelled from Spain in 1493, and who wrote a commentary on the Kabbalistic work, entitled *The Divine Order*;<sup>18</sup> and (ii) Abraham Ibn Sabba, who was banished with thousands of his brethren from Lisbon, 1499, and who is the author of a very extensive commentary on the Pentateuch, entitled *The Bundle of Myrrh*, in which he largely avails himself of the *Sohar* and other earlier Kabbalistic works.<sup>19</sup>

1463-1494. The Kabbalah, which soon after its birth became partially known to Christians through Raymond Lully, was now accessible to Christian scholars through the exertions and influence of the famous Count John Pico di Mirandola (born in 1463). This celebrated philosopher determined to fathom the mysteries of the Kabbalah, and for this purpose put himself under the tuition of a Jew, R. Jochanan Aleman, who came to Italy from Constantinople. His extraordinary intellectual powers soon enabled Mirandola to overcome the difficulties and to unravel the secrets of this theosophy. His labours were greatly rewarded; for, according to his shewing,

17 Botarel's Commentary on the *Book Jetzira* was first published with the text of this book and other commentaries, Mantua, 1562; then Zolkiev, 1745; and in Grodno, 1806, 1820.

18 The ספר חזקוני which is a Commentary on the ספר חנוך was published together with it in Ferrara, 1558.

19 The Commentary צירי המור was first published at Constantinople, 1514; then in Venice, 1523, 1546, 1566; and in Cracow 1595. Pellican has translated this Commentary into Latin, and the MS. of this version is in the Zurich Library.

he found that<sup>20</sup> there is more Christianity in the Kabbalah than Judaism; he discovered in it proof for the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the divinity of Christ, original sin, the expiation thereof by Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of the angels, the order of the angels, purgatory and hell-fire; in fact the same Gospel which we find in St. Paul, Dionysius, St. Jerome and St. Augustine. As the result of his Kabbalistic studies Mirandola published, in 1486, when only twenty-four years of age, *nine hundred Theses*, which were placarded in Rome, and which he undertook to defend in the presence of all European scholars, whom he invited to the eternal city, promising to defray their travelling expenses. Among these *Theses* was the following, "*No science yields greater proof of the divinity of Christ than magic and the Kabbalah.*"<sup>21</sup> Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484) was so delighted with it that he greatly exerted himself to have Kabbalistic writings translated into Latin for the use of divinity students.<sup>22</sup> Mirandola accordingly translated the following three works: 1, Menahem di Recanti's Commentary on the Pentateuch, erroneously called *R. Levi de Recineto* (Wolf, *ibid*, p. 10); 2, Eliezer of Worms' חכמת הנפש *de Scientia animae*; and 3, Shem Tob Falaquera's ספר המעלות

1455-1522. Not only did Mirandola make the Kabbalah known to the Christians in Italy, but he was the means of introducing it into Germany through John Reuchlin, the

20 Vidi in illis (testis est Deus) religionem non tam Mosaicam quam Christianam; ibi Trinitatis mysterium: ibi verbi Incarnatio, ibi Messiae divinitates; ibi de peccato originali, de illius per Christum expiatione, de caelesti Hierusalem, de casu daemonum, de ordinibus Angelorum, de Purgatoriis, de Inferorum poenis; Eadem legi, quae apud Paulum et Dionysium, apud Hieronymum et Augustinum quotidie legimus. Comp. Index a Jacobo Gaffarello, published by Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, vol. i, p. 9 at the end of the volume.

21 Nulla est scientia, quae nos magis certificet de divinitate Christi, quam magia et Cabbala, vide *Apologia*, p. 42, opp. vol. 1. Basil, 1601.

22. Hic libri (Cabbalistorum) Sixtus IV, Pontifex maximus, qui hunc, sub quo vivimus feliciter, Innocentium VIII, proxime antecessit, maxima cura studioque curavit, ut in publicam fidei nostrae utilitatem, Latinis literis mandarentur, jamque cum ille decessit, tres ex illis pervenerant ad Latinos. Vide Gaffarelli in Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, appendix to vol. i, p. 9.

father of the German Reformation. This eminent scholar,—who is also called by the Greek name *Capnion* (καπνιον), or *Capnio*, which is a translation of his German name REUCHLIN, i.e. *smoke*, in accordance with the fashion of the time; just as GERARD, signifying *amiable*, assumed the name of DESIDERIUS ERASMUS, and SCHWARTZERTH, denoting *black earth*, took the name of MELANCHTHON,—was born at Phorzheim December 28, 1455. At the age of seventeen he was called to the court of Baden, and received among the court singers in consequence of his beautiful voice. His brilliant attainments soon attracted notice, and he was sent (1473) with the young Margrave Frederick, eldest son of Charles II, afterwards bishop of Utrecht, to the celebrated high school of Paris. Here he acquired, from Hermonymus of Sparta and other fugitive Greek literati, who went to Paris after the taking of Constantinople (1453), that remarkable knowledge of Greek which enabled him so largely to amass the Attic lore and rendered him so famous through Europe. He went to Basle in 1474, delivered lectures on the Latin language and the classics, and had among his hearers nobles of high rank both from France and Germany. He went to Tübingen in 1481, where his fame secured for him the friendship of Eberhard the Bearded, who made him his private secretary and privy councillor, and as such this prince took Reuchlin with him to Rome in 1482, where he made that splendid Latin oration before the Pope and the cardinals, which elicited from his Holiness the declaration that Reuchlin deserved to be placed among the best orators of France and Italy. From Rome Eberhard took him to Florence, and it was here that Reuchlin became acquainted with the celebrated Mirandola and with the Kabbalah. But as he was appointed licentiate and assessor of the supreme court in Stuttgard, the new residence of Eberhard, on his return in 1484, and as the order of Dominicans elected him as their proctor in the whole of Germany,

Reuchlin had not time to enter at once upon the study of Hebrew and Aramaic, which are the key to the Kabbalah, and he had reluctantly to wait till 1492, when he accompanied Eberhard to the imperial court at Ling. Here he became acquainted with R. Jacob b. Jechiel Loanz, a learned Hebrew, and court physician of Frederick III, from whom he learned Hebrew.<sup>23</sup> Whereupon Reuchlin at once betook himself to the study of *the Kabbalah*, and within two years of his beginning to learn the language in which it is written, his first Kabbalistic treatise, entitled *De Verbo Mirifico* (Basle, 1494), appeared. This treatise is of the greatest rarity, and the following analysis of it is given by Franck. It is in the form of a dialogue between an Epicurean philosopher named Sidonius, a Jew named Baruch, and the author, who is introduced by his Greek name Capnio, and consists of three books, according to the number of speakers.

Book I, the exponent of which is Baruch the Jewish Kabbalist, is occupied with a refutation of the Epicurean doctrines, and simply reproduces the arguments generally urged against this system, for which reason we omit any further description of it.

Book II endeavours to shew that all wisdom and true philosophy are derived from the Hebrews, that Plato, Pythagoras and Zoroaster borrowed their ideas from the Bible, and that traces of the Hebrew language are to be found in the liturgies and sacred books of all nations. Then follows an explanation of the four divine names, which are shown to have been transplanted into the systems of Greek philosophy. The first and most distinguished of them אֲנִי הָאֵל אֲנִי *ego sum qui sum* (Exod. iii, 12), is translated in the Platonic philosophy by *ὁ ὄντων ὢν*. The second divine name, which we translate by הָאֵל הָעוֹלָם *HE*, *i.e.*, the sign of unchangeableness and

<sup>23</sup> "Is (Jekiel Loanz) me, supra quam dici queat, fideliter libros Hebraicos primus edocuit." *Comp. Rudim. Hebr.* p. 8.

of the eternal idea of the Deity, is also to be found among the Greek philosophers in the term *πανν*, which is opposed to *σαρπν*. The third name of God used in Holy Writ is **שם** FIRE. In this form God appeared in the burning bush when he first manifested himself to Moses. The prophets describe him as a burning fire, and John the Baptist depicts him as such when he says, "I baptize you with water, but he who cometh after me shall baptize you with fire." (Matt. iii, 11.) The fire of the Hebrew prophets is the same as the ether (*αι θηρ*) mentioned in the hymns of Orpheus. But these three names are in reality only one, showing to us the divine nature in three different aspects. Thus God calls himself *the Being*, because every existence emanates from him; he calls himself *Fire*, because it is he who illuminates and animates all things and he is always **HE**, because he always remains like himself amidst the infinite variety of his works. Now just as there are names which express the nature of the Deity, so there are names which refer to his attributes, and these are the *ten Sephiroth*. If we look away from every attribute and every definite point of view in which the divine subsistence may be contemplated, if we endeavour to depict the absolute Being as concentrating himself within himself, and not affording us any explicable relation to our intellect, he is then described by a name which it is forbidden to pronounce, by the thrice holy Tetragrammaton, the name Jehovah (**יהוה**) *the Shem Ha-Mephorash* (**שם הכפורש**).

There is no doubt that the tetrad (*τετρακτύς*) of Pythagoras is an imitation of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton, and that the worship of the decade has simply been invented in honour of the *ten Sephiroth*. The four letters composing this name represent the four fundamental constituents of the body (*i.e.*, heat, cold, dryness and humidity), the four geometrical principal points (*i.e.*, the point, the line, flat and body), the four notes of the musical scale, the four rivers in the earthly



paradise, the four symbolical figures in the vision of Ezekiel, &c., &c., &c. Moreover if we look at these four letters separately we shall find that each of them has equally a recon-dite meaning. The first letter י, which also stands for the number *ten*, and which by its form reminds us of the mathematical point, teaches us that God is the beginning and end of all things. The number *five*, expressed by ה the second letter, shows us the union of God with nature—of God inasmuch as he is depicted by the number three, *i.e.*, the Trinity; and of visible nature, inasmuch as it is represented by Plato and Pythagoras under the dual. The number *six*, expressed by ו, the third letter, which is likewise revered in the Pythagorean school, is formed by the combination of one, two, and three, the symbol of all perfection. Moreover the number *six* is the symbol of the cube, the bodies (*solida*), or the world. Hence it is evident that the world has in it the imprint of divine perfection. The fourth and last letter of this divine name (ו) is like the second, represents the number *five*, and here symbolizes the human and rational soul, which is the medium between heaven and earth, just as five is the centre of the decade, the symbolic expression of the totality of things.

Book III, the exponent of which is Capnio, endeavours to shew that the most essential doctrines of Christianity are to be found by the same method. Let a few instances of this method suffice. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is to be found in the first verse of Genesis. If the Hebrew word ברא which is translated *created*, be examined, and if each of the three letters composing this word be taken as the initial of a separate word, we obtain the expressions בן רוח אב *Son, Spirit, Father*. Upon the same principle we find the two persons of the Trinity in the words, "the stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner" (Ps. cxviii, 22), inasmuch as the three letters composing the

word **אבן** *stone*, are to be divided into **אב** *Father*, **בן** *Son*. Orpheus, in his hymn on the night, described the Trinity of the New Testament in the words, *νύξ, οὐρανός, αἰθήρ*, for night which begets everything can only designate *the Father*; heaven, that olyphus which in its boundlessness embraces all things, and which proceeded from the night, signifies *the Son*; whilst ether, which the ancient poet also designates *fiery breath*, is the *Holy Ghost*. The name Jesus in Hebrew יהושע the *πενταγράμματον* yields the name יהוה *Jehovah*; and the **ש** which in the language of the Kabbalah is the symbol of fire or light, which St. Jerome, in his mystical exposition of the alphabet, has made the sign of the *Λόγος*. This mysterious name therefore contains a whole revelation, inasmuch as it shows us that Jesus is God himself, the Light or the *Logos*. Even the cross, which is the symbol of Christianity, is plainly indicated in the Old Testament, by the tree of life which God planted in the midst of the garden; by the praying attitude of Moses, when he raised his hands towards heaven in his intercession for Israel during the combat with Amalek; and by the tree which converted the bitter waters into sweet in the wilderness of Marah.<sup>24</sup>

The Treatise *de Verbo Mirifico* is, however, only an introduction to another work on the same subject which Reuchlin published twenty-two years later, entitled *De Arte Cabalistica*. Hagenau, 1516. This Treatise, like the first, is in the form of a dialogue between a Mohammedan named Marrianus, a Pythagorean Philosopher named Philolaus, and a Jewish doctor named Simon. The dialogue is held in Frankfort, where the Jew resides, to whom the Mohammedan and Pythagorean resort to be initiated into the mysteries of the Kabbalah. The whole is a more matured exposition and elaboration of the ideas hinted at in his first work.

<sup>24</sup> Comp. Franck, *Die Kabbalah oder die Religions Philosophie der Hebräer* übersetzt von Jellinek. Leipzig, 1844, p. 8, &c.

The Kabbalah, according to Reuchlin, is a symbolical reception of Divine revelation; and a distinction is to be made between *Cabalici*, to whom belongs heavenly inspiration; their disciples *Cabalaai*, and their imitators *Cabalistae*. The design of the Kabbalah is to propound the relations of the absolute Creator to the creature. God is the Creator of all beings which emanated from him, and he implanted aspirations in them to attain actual communion with him. In order that feeble man might attain this communion, God revealed himself to mankind in various ways, but especially to Moses. This Divine revelation to Moses contains far more than appears on the surface of the Pentateuch. There is a recondite wisdom concealed in it which distinguishes it from other codes of morals and precepts. There are in the Pentateuch many pleonasms and repetitions of the same things and words, and as we cannot charge God with having inserted useless and superfluous words in the Holy Scriptures, we must believe that something more profound is contained in them, to which the Kabbalah gives the key.

This key consists in permutations, commutations, &c., &c. But this act of exchanging and arranging letters, and of interpreting for the edification of the soul the Holy Scriptures, which we have received from God as a divine thing not to be understood by the multitude, was not communicated by Moses to everybody, but to the elect, such as Joshua, and so by tradition it came to the seventy interpreters. This gift is called *Kabbalah*. God, out of love to his people, has revealed hidden mysteries to some of them, and these have found the living spirit in the dead letter; that is to say, the Scriptures consist of separate letters, visible signs which stand in a certain relation to the angels as celestial and spiritual emanations from God; and by pronouncing them, the latter also are affected. To a true Kabbalist, who has an insight into the whole connection of the terrestrial with the celestial, these

signs thus put together are the means of placing him in close union with spirits, who are thereby bound to fulfil his wishes.<sup>25</sup>

The extraordinary influence which Reuchlin's Kabbalistic Treatises exercised upon the greatest thinkers of the time and upon the early reformers may be judged of from the unmeasured terms of praise which they bestowed upon their author. The Treatises were regarded as heavenly communications, revealing new divine wisdom. Conrad Leontarius, writing to Wimpfeling on the subject, says—"I never saw anything more beautiful or admirable than this work (*i.e.*, *De Verbo Mirifico*), which easily convinces him who reads it that no philosopher, whether Jew or Christian, is superior to Reuchlin." Aegidius, general of the Eremites, wrote to the holy Augustine "that Reuchlin had rendered him, as well as the rest of mankind, happy by his works, which had made known to all a thing hitherto unheard of." Philip Beroaldus, the younger, sent him word "that Pope Leo X had read his Pythagorean book greedily, as he did all good books; afterwards the Cardinal de Medici had done so, and he himself should soon enjoy it."<sup>26</sup> Such was the interest which this newly-revealed Kabbalah created among Christians, that not only learned men but statesmen and warriors began to study the oriental languages, in order to be able to fathom the mysteries of this theosophy.

1450-1498. Whilst the Kabbalah was gaining such high favour amongst Christians both in Italy and Germany, through the exertions of Mirandola and Reuchlin, a powerful voice was raised among the Jews against *the Sohar*, the very Bible of this theosophy. Elia del Medigo, born at Candia, then in Venetia, 1450, of a German literary family, professor of

<sup>25</sup> Comp. *The Life and Times of John Reuchlin*, by Francis Besham, p. 102, &c.

<sup>26</sup> *Vide Life of John Reuchlin*, p. 108.

philosophy in the University of Padua, teacher of Pico de Mirandola, and a scholar of the highest reputation both among his Jewish brethren and among Christians, impugned the authority of *the Sohar*. In his philosophical Treatise on the nature of Judaism as a harmonizer between religion and philosophy, entitled *An Examination of the Law* (בחינת הורא), which he wrote December 29, 1491, he puts into the mouth of an antagonist to the Kabbalah the following three arguments against the genuineness of the *Sohar*: 1, Neither the Talmud, nor the Gaonim and Rabbins knew anything of the *Sohar* or of its doctrines; 2, The *Sohar* was published at a very late period; and 3, Many anachronisms occur in it, inasmuch as it describes later Amoraic authorities as having direct intercourse with the Tanaite R. Simon b. Jochai who belongs to an earlier period.<sup>27</sup>

1522-1570. The voice of Elia del Medigo and others, however, had no power to check the rapid progress of the Kabbalah, which had now found its way from Spain and Italy into Palestine and Poland, and penetrated all branches of life and literature. Passing over the host of minor advocates and teachers, we shall mention the two great masters in Palestine, who formed two distinct schools, distinguished by the prominence which they respectively gave to certain doctrines of the Kabbalah. The first of these is Moses Cordovero, also called *Remak* = רמ"ק from the acrostic of his name קורדואירו *R. Moses Cordovero*. He was born in Cordova, 1522, studied the Kabbalah under his learned brother-in-law, Solomon Aleavez, and very soon became so distinguished as a Kabbalist and author that his fame travelled to Italy, where his works were greedily bought. His principal works are: 1, An Introduction to the Kabbalah, entitled *A Sombre or Sweet*

<sup>27</sup> The *בחינת הורא* was first published in a collection of diverse Treatises, in Basle, 1620-31; and then in Vienna, 1833, with an elaborate philosophical commentary by T. S. Reggio. The arguments against *the Sohar* are in this edition, p. 43.

*Light* (אור נערכ) first published in Venice, 1587, then in Cracow, 1647, and in Fürth, 1701; 2, Kabbalistic reflections and comments on ninety-nine passages of the Bible, entitled *The Book of Retirement* (ספר נרשין), published in Venice, 1543; and 3, A large Kabbalistic work entitled *The Garden of Pomegranates* (פרדס רמונים), which consists of thirteen sections or gates (שערים) subdivided into chapters, and discusses the *Sephiroth*, the Divine names, the import and significance of the letters, &c., &c. It was first published in Cracow, 1591. Excerpts of it have been translated into Latin by Bartolocci, *Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica*, vol. iv, p. 231, &c., and Knorr von Rosenroth, *Tractatus de Anima ex libro Pardes Rimmonim* in his *Cabbala Denudata*, Sulzbach, 1677.<sup>28</sup>

The peculiar feature of Cordovero is that he is chiefly occupied with the scientific speculations of the Kabbalah, or the *speculative Kabbalah* (קבלה עיונית), as it is called in the modern terminology of this esoteric doctrine, in contradistinction to the *wonder-working Kabbalah* (קבלה מעשית), keeping aloof to a great extent from the extravagances which we shall soon have to notice. In this respect therefore he represents the Kabbalah in its primitive state, as may be seen from the following specimen of his lucubrations on the nature of the Deity. "The knowledge of the Creator is different from that of the creature, since in the case of the latter, knowledge and the thing known are distinct, thus leading to subjects which are again separate from him. This is described by the three expressions—cogitation, the cogitator and the cogitated object. Now the Creator is himself knowledge, knowing and the known object. His knowledge does not consist in the fact that he directs his thoughts to things

<sup>28</sup> For the other works of Cordovero, both published and unpublished, we must refer to Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, vol. i, p. 187, &c.; and Steinschneider, *Catalogus Libr. Hebr. in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, col. 1793, &c.

without him, since in comprehending and knowing himself, he comprehends and knows everything which exists. There is nothing which is not united with him, and which he does not find in his own substance. He is the archetype of all things existing, and all things are in him in their purest and most perfect form; so that the perfection of the creatures consists in the support whereby they are united to the primary source of his existence, and they sink down and fall from that perfect and lofty position in proportion to their separation from him."<sup>29</sup>

1534-1572. The opposite to this school is the one founded by Isaac Luria or Loria, also called *Ari* = ארי" from the initials of his name יצחק ר' האשכנזי *R. Isaac Ashkanazi*. He was born at Jerusalem 1534, and, having lost his father when very young, was taken by his mother to Kahira, where he was put by his rich uncle under the tuition of the best Jewish master. Up to his twenty-second year he was a diligent student of the Talmud and the Rabbinic lore, and distinguished himself in these departments of learning in a most remarkable manner. He then lived in retirement for about seven years to give free scope to his thoughts and meditations, but he soon found that simple retirement from collegiate studies did not satisfy him. He therefore removed to the banks of the Nile, where he lived in a sequestered cottage for several years, giving himself up entirely to meditations and reveries. Here he had constant interviews with the prophet Elias, who communicated to him sublime doctrines. Here, too, his soul ascended to heaven whenever he was asleep, and in the celestial regions held converse with the souls of the great teachers of bygone days. When thirty-six years of age (1570) the Prophet Elias appeared to him again and told him to go to Palestine, where his successor was awaiting him. Obedient to the command, he went to Safet, where he gathered

<sup>29</sup> *Pardes Rimmonim* = The Garden of Pomegranates, 55 a.

round him ten disciples, visited the sepulchres of ancient teachers, and there, by prostrations and prayers, obtained from their spirits all manner of revelations, so much so that he was convinced he was the Messiah b. Joseph and that he was able to perform all sorts of miracles. It was this part of the Kabbalah, *i.e.*, the ascetic and miraculous (קבלה מעשית), which Loria taught. His sentiments he delivered orally, as he himself did not write anything, except perhaps some marginal notes of a critical import in older books and MSS. His disciples treasured up his marvellous sayings, whereby they performed miracles and converted thousands to the doctrines of this theosophy.

1543-1620. The real exponent of Loria's Kabbalistic system is his celebrated disciple Chajim Vital, a descendant of a Calabrian family, who died in 1620 at the age of seventy-seven. After the demise of his teacher, Chajim Vital diligently collected all the MS. notes of the lectures which Loria's disciples had written down, from which, together with his own jottings, he produced the gigantic and famous system of the Kabbalah, entitled *the Tree of Life* (עץ החיים). This work, over which Vital laboured thirty years, was at first circulated in MS. copies, and every one of the Kabbalistic disciples had to pledge himself, under pain of excommunication, not to allow a copy to be made for a foreign land; so that for a time all the Codd. remained in Palestine. At last, however, this Thesaurus of the Kabbalah, which properly consists of six works, was published by J. Satanow at Zolkiew, 1772. New editions of it appeared in Korez, 1785; Sklow, 1800; Dobrowne, 1804; Sulikow, 1818; and Knorr von Rosenroth has translated into Latin a portion of that part of the great work which treats on *the doctrine of the metempsychosis* (הגלגולים).<sup>30</sup>

1558-1560. The circulation of Loria's work which gave

<sup>30</sup> For a description of the component parts of the עץ החיים as well as for an account of the sundry editions of the several parts, published at different times, we must refer to Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, vol. iii, pp. 479-481.



an extraordinary impetus to the Kabbalah, and which gave rise to the new school and a separate congregation in Palestine, was not the only favourable circumstance which had arisen to advance and promulgate the esoteric doctrine. The *Sohar*, which since its birth had been circulated in MS., was now for the first time printed in Mantua, and thousands of people who had hitherto been unable to procure the MS. were thus enabled to possess themselves of copies.<sup>31</sup> It is, however, evident that with the increased circulation of these two Bibles of the Kabbalah, as the *Sohar* and Loria's *Etz Chajim* are called, there was an increased cry on the part of learned Jews against the doctrines propounded in them. Isaac b. Immanuel de Lates, the Rabbi of Pesaro, and the great champion for the Kabbalah, who prefixed a commendatory epistle to the *Sohar*, tells us most distinctly that some Rabbins wanted to prevent the publication of the *Sohar*, urging that it ought to be kept secret or be burned, because it tends to heretical doctrines.<sup>32</sup>

1571-1648. Of the numerous opponents to the Kabbalah which the *Sohar* and Loria's work called forth, Leo de Modena was by far the most daring, the most outspoken and the most powerful. This eminent scholar who is known to the Christian world by his celebrated *History of the Rites, Customs and Manners of the Jews*, which was originally written in Italian, published in Padua, 1640, and which has been translated into Latin, English, French, Dutch, &c., attacked the Kabbalah in two of his works. His first onslaught is on the doctrine of metempsychosis in his Treatise entitled *Ben David*. He composed this Treatise in 1635-36, at the request of David Finzi, of Egypt, and he demonstrates therein that this doctrine

31 An analysis of the *Sohar*, as well as a description of the different editions of it, are given in the second part of this Essay, p. 160, &c.

32 Comp. his Resp., ed. Vienna, 1860, p. 24, &c., מסק נר הרבנים אשר בקשו לעכב הדפסת הוזהר כסעם נורות המלכות על שריפת התלמוד עד יס מהם שהוסיפו סרה ואמרו כי העין בוחרת יביא למנוח ולסכך ששן נעוה או שריפת לבשר הקדש.

is of Gentile origin, and was rejected by the great men of the Jewish faith in bygone days, refuting at the same time the philosophico-theological arguments advanced in its favour.<sup>33</sup> It is, however, his second attack on this esoteric doctrine, in his work entitled *The Roaring Lion* (אֵרִי נֹרָה), which is so damaging to the Kabbalah. In this Treatise—which Leo de Modena composed in 1639, at the advanced age of sixty-eight, to reclaim Joseph Chamiz, a beloved disciple of his, who was an ardent follower of the Kabbalah—he shows that the books which propound this esoteric doctrine, and which are palmed upon ancient authorities, are pseudonymous; that the doctrines themselves are mischievous; and that the followers of this system are inflated with proud notions, pretending to know the nature of God better than anyone else, and to possess the nearest and best way of approaching the Deity.<sup>34</sup>

1623. The celebrated Hebraist, Joseph Solomon del Medigo (born 1591, died 1637), a contemporary of the preceding writer, also employed his vast stores of erudition to expose this system. Having been asked by R. Serach for his views of the Kabbalah, del Medigo, in a masterly letter, written in 1623, shows up the folly of this esoteric doctrine, and the unreasonableness of the exegetical rules, whereby the followers of this system pretend to deduce it from the Bible.<sup>35</sup>

1635. We have seen that the information about the Kabbalah, which Mirandola and Reuchlin imparted to Christians, was chiefly derived from the writings of Recanti and Gikatilla. Now that the *Sohar* had been published, Joseph de Voisin

33 This Treatise is published in the collection entitled כִּסֵּם וּקְצִים by Eliezar Ashkanazi, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1854.

34 The אֵרִי נֹרָה was published by Dr. Julius Fürst, Leipzig, 1840. Leo de Modena's relation to the Kabbalah, the Talmud and Christianity is shown in an elaborate Introduction by Geiger in the מאמר מן חזונו Berlin, 1858. See also the article LEO DE MODENA, in Alexander's edition of Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, vol. ii, p. 811.

35 This Epistle, together with a German translation and learned notes, has been published by Geiger in his collection of sundry treatises, entitled *Melo Chofnaim*. Berlin, 1840.

determined to be the first to make some portions of it accessible to those Christian readers who did not understand the Aramaic in which this Thesaurus is written. Accordingly he translated some extracts of the *Sohar* which treat of the nature of the human soul.<sup>36</sup>

1652-1654. Just at the very time when some of the most distinguished Jews exposed the pretensions of the Kabbalah, and denounced the fanciful and unjustifiable rules of interpretation whereby its advocates tried to evolve it from the letters of the revealed law, the celebrated Athanasius Kircher, in a most learned and elaborate treatise on this subject, maintained that the Kabbalah was introduced into Egypt by no less a person than the patriarch Abraham; and that from Egypt it gradually issued all over the East, and intermixed with all religions and systems of philosophy. What is still more extraordinary is that this learned Jesuit, in thus exalting the Kabbalah, lays the greatest stress on that part of it which developed itself afterwards, viz., the combinations, transpositions and permutations of the letters, and does not discriminate between it and the speculations about the *En Soph*, the *Sephiroth*, &c., which were the original characteristics of this theosophy.<sup>37</sup> The amount of Eastern lore, however, which Kircher has amassed in his work will always remain a noble monument to the extensive learning of this Jesuit.

1645-1676. The wonder-working or practical branch of the Kabbalah (קבלה מעשית), as it is called, so elaborately propounded and defended by Kircher, which consists in the transpositions of the letters of the sundry divine names, &c., and which as we have seen constituted no part of the original Kabbalah, had now largely laid hold on the minds and fancies

<sup>36</sup> Comp. *Disputatio Cabalistica R. Israel filii Mosis de anima*, &c., adjectis commentariis ex *Zohar*. Paris, 1635.

<sup>37</sup> Kircher's Treatise on the Kabbalah is contained in his stupendous work, entitled *Œdipus Ægyptiacus*, vol. ii, pp. 209-360. Rome, 1635.

of both Jews and Christians, and was producing among the former the most mournful and calamitous effects. The famous Kabbalist, Sabbatai Zevi, who was born in Smyrna, July, 1641, was the chief actor in this tragedy. When a child he was sent to a Rabbinic school, and instructed in the Law, the Mishna, the Talmud, the Midrashim, and the whole cycle of Rabbinic lore. So great were his intellectual powers, and so vast the knowledge he acquired, that when fifteen he betook himself to the study of the Kabbalah, rapidly mastered its mysteries, became peerless in his knowledge of "those things which were revealed and those things which were hidden;" and at the age of eighteen obtained the honourable appellation *sage* (סַגֵּה), and delivered public lectures, expounding the divine law and the esoteric doctrine before crowded audiences. At the age of twenty-four he gave himself out as the Messiah, the Son of David, and the Redeemer of Israel, pronouncing publicly the Tetragrammaton, which was only allowed to the high priests during the existence of the second Temple. Though the Jewish sages of Smyrna excommunicated him for it, he travelled to Salonica, Athens, Morea and Jerusalem, teaching the Kabbalah, proclaiming himself as the Messiah, anointing prophets and converting thousands upon thousands. So numerous were the believers in him, that in many places trade was entirely stopped; the Jews wound up their affairs, disposed of their chattels and made themselves ready to be redeemed from their captivity and led by Sabbatai Zevi back to Jerusalem. The consuls of Europe were ordered to enquire into this extraordinary movement, and the governors of the East reported to the Sultan the cessation of commerce. Sabbatai Zevi was then arrested by order of the Sultan, Mohammed IV, and taken before him at Adrianople. The Sultan spoke to him as follows—"I am going to test thy Messiahship. Three poisoned arrows shall be shot into thee, and if they do not kill thee, I too will believe that thou art the

Messiah." He saved himself by embracing Islamism in the presence of the Sultan, who gave him the name *Kffendi*, and appointed him *Kapidgi Bash*. Thus ended the career of the Kabbalist Sabbatai Zevi, after having ruined thousands upon thousands of Jewish families.<sup>38</sup>

1677-1684. Whether the learned Knorr Baron von Rosenroth knew of the extravagances of Sabbatai Zevi or not is difficult to say. At all events this accomplished Christian scholar believed that Simon b. Jochai was the author of the *Sohar*, that he wrote it under divine inspiration, and that it is most essential to the elucidation of the doctrines of Christianity. With this conviction he determined to master the difficulties connected with the Kabbalistic writings, in order to render the principal works of this esoteric doctrine accessible to his Christian brethren. For, although Lully, Mirandola, Reuchlin and Kircher had already done much to acquaint the Christian world with the secrets of the Kabbalah, none of these scholars had given translations of any portions of the *Sohar*. Knorr Baron von Rosenroth, therefore put himself under the tuition of R. Meier Stern, a learned Jew, and with his assistance was enabled to publish the celebrated work entitled the *Unveiled Kabbalah* (KABBALA DENUDATA), in two large volumes, the first of which was printed at Sulzbach, 1677-78, and the second at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1684, giving a Latin translation of the Introduction to and the following portion of the *Sohar*—the *Book of Mysteries* (סֵפֶר הַמִּסְתֵּרִים); the *Great Assembly* (אֵל מִלְאָה); the *Small Assembly* (אֵל מִלְאָה); Joseph Gikatilla's *Gate of Light* (שַׁעַר הַאוֹר); the *Doctrine of Alemyssichosis* (דּוֹקטְרִינַת אֱלֵמִיטִיכֹסִיס), and the *Tree of Life* (עֵץ הַחַיָּה), of Chajim Vital; the *Garden of Pomegranates* (גַּרְדֵּן הָרִמּוֹן), of Moses Cordovero; the *House of the Lord* (בֵּית הַיְהוָה), and the *Gate of Heaven* (שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמַיִם), of

<sup>38</sup> Comp. Jost, *Geschichte des Judenthums und seiner Secten*, vol. iii, p. 153, &c. Leipzig, 1859.

Abraham Herera ; the *Valley of the King* (עמק המלך), of Naphtali b. Jacob ; the *Vision of the Priest* (מראה כהן), of Issachar Beer b. Naphtali Cohen, &c., &c., with elaborate annotations, glossaries and indices. The only drawback to this gigantic work is that it is without any system, and that it mixes up in one all the earlier developments of the Kabbalah with the later productions. Still the criticism passed upon it by Buddeus, that it is a "confused and obscure work, in which the necessary and the unnecessary, the useful and the useless are mixed up and thrown together as it were into one chaos,"<sup>39</sup> is rather too severe ; and it must be remembered that if the *Kabbala Denudata* does not exhibit a regular system of this esoteric doctrine, it furnishes much material for it. Baron von Rosenroth has also collected all the passages of the New Testament which contain similar doctrines to those propounded by the Kabbalah.

1758-1763. Amongst the Jews, however, the pretensions and consequences of the Kabbalistic Pseudo-Messiah, Sabbatai Zevi, and his followers, produced a new era in the criticism of the *Sohar*. Even such a scholar and thorough Kabbalist as Jacob b. Zevi of Emden, or *Jabez* (יעב"ז), as he is called from the acrostic of his name (יעקב בן צבי), maintains in his work, which he wrote in 1758-1763, and which he entitled *The Wrapper of Books*, that with the exception of the kernel of the *Sohar* all the rest is of a late origin.<sup>40</sup> He shows that (1) The *Sohar* misquotes passages of Scripture, misunderstands the Talmud, and contains some rituals which were ordained by later Rabbinic authorities (פוסקים). (2) Mentions the crusades against the Mohammedans. (3) Uses

<sup>39</sup> Confusam et obscuram opus, in quo necessaria cum non necessariis, utilia cum inutilibus, confusa sunt, et in unam velut chaos conjuncta. *Introductio in Historiam Philosophiæ Hebræorum*. Halle, 1702. Buddeus gives in this Introduction (p. 232, &c.), a detailed description of the *Kabbala Denudata*.

<sup>40</sup> The *מכתב העצום* of Jabez was published at Altona, 1763. A thorough critique of it is given by Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. vii, p. 494, &c.

the philosophical terminology of Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew Translation of Maimonides' *More Nebuchim*, and borrows the figure of Jehudah Ha-Levi's Khosari, that "Israel is the heart in the organism of the human race, and therefore feels its sufferings more acutely" (*Khosari*, ii, 36, with *Sohar*, iii, 221 b, 161 a); and (4) Knows the Portuguese and North Spanish expression *Esnoga*.

1767. Whilst the Jews were thus shaken in their opinion about the antiquity of the *Sohar*, learned Christians both on the Continent and in England maintained that Simon b. Jochai was the author of the Bible of the Kabbalah, and quoted its sentiments in corroboration of their peculiar views. Thus Dr. Gill, the famous Hebraist and commentator, in his work on *the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language*, adduces passages from the *Sohar* to shew that the Hebrew vowel points were known A.D. 120, at which time he tells us "lived Simon ben Jochai, a disciple of R. Akiba, author of the *Zohar*."<sup>41</sup>

1830. Allen, in the account of the Kabbalah in his *Modern Judaism*, also premises the antiquity of the *Sohar*. Taking this pseudonym as the primary source of the primitive Kabbalah, Allen, like all his predecessors, mixes up the early mysticism and magic, as well as the later abuse of the Hagadic rules of interpretation, denominated *Gematria*, *Notaricon*, *Ziruph*, &c., which the Kabbalists afterwards appropriated, with the original doctrines of this theosophy.<sup>42</sup>

1843. Even the erudite Professor Franck, in his excellent work *La Kabbale* (Paris, 1843), makes no distinction between the *Book Jetzira* and the *Sohar*, but regards the esoteric doctrines of the latter as a development and continuation of the tenets propounded in the former. He moreover main-

<sup>41</sup> Comp. *A Dissertation concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-points and Accents*. By John Gill, D.D. London, 1767.

<sup>42</sup> *Modern Judaism*, by John Allen, p. 67-96, 2nd edition. London, 1830.

tains that the *Sohar* consists of ancient and modern fragments, that the ancient portions are the *Book of Mysteries* (ספרא דצניעותא), the *Great Assembly* or *Idra Rabba* (אדרא רבא), and the *Small Assembly* or *Idra Suta* (אדרא זוטא), and actually proceeds from the school of R. Simon b. Jochai, while several of the other parts belong to a subsequent period, but not later than the seventh century; that the fatherland of the *Sohar* is Palestine; that the fundamental principles of the Kabbalah, which were communicated by R. Simon b. Jochai to a small number of his disciples, were at first propagated orally; that they were then from the first to the seventh century gradually edited and enlarged through additions and commentaries, and that the whole of this compilation, completed in the seventh century, owing to its many attacks on the Asiatic religions, was kept secret till the thirteenth century, when it was brought to Europe. To fortify his opinions about the antiquity of the Kabbalah, Franck is obliged to palm the doctrine of the *Sephiroth* upon passages in the Talmud in a most unnatural manner. As this point, however, has been discussed in the second part of this Essay, (*vide supra*, p. 183, etc.) there is no necessity for repeating the arguments here.<sup>43</sup> Still Franck's valuable contribution to the elucidation of the *Sohar* will always be a welcome aid to the student of this difficult book.

1845. A new era in the study of the Kabbalah was created by the researches of M. H. Landauer, who died February 3rd, 1841, when scarcely thirty-three years of age. This learned Rabbi, whose premature death is an irreparable loss to literature, in spite of constitutional infirmities, which occasioned him permanent sufferings during the short period of his earthly career, devoted himself from his youth to the

<sup>43</sup> Franck's *La Kabbale* has been translated into German, with notes and corrections by the learned and indefatigable Adolph Jellinek; *Die Kabbala oder die Religions-Philosophie der Hebräer*. Leipzig, 1844.



study of Hebrew, the Mishna, the Talmud, and the rich stores of Jewish learning. He afterwards visited the universities of Munich and Tübingen, and in addition to his other researches in the department of Biblical criticism, determined to fathom the depths of the Kabbalah. It was this scholar who, after a careful study of this esoteric doctrine, for the first time distinguished between the ancient mysticism of the Gaonim period and the real Kabbalah, and shewed that "the former, as contained in the *Alphabet of R. Akiba* (אותיות דר' עקיבא), the *Dimensions of the Deity* (שיעור קומה), the *Heavenly Mansions* (היכלות), and even the *Book of Jetzira* (ספר יצירה) and similar documents, essentially differ from the later Kabbalah, inasmuch as it knows nothing about the so-called *Sephiroth* and about the speculations respecting the nature of the Deity, and that, according to the proper notions of the Kabbalah, its contents ought to be described as *Hagada* and not as Kabbalah."<sup>44</sup> As to the *Sohar*, Landauer maintains that it was written by Abraham b. Samuel Abulafia towards the end of the second half of the thirteenth century. Landauer's views on the Kabbalah and on the authorship of the *Sohar*, as Steinschneider rightly remarks, are all the more weighty and instructive because he originally started with opinions of an exactly opposite character. (*Jewish Literature*, p. 299.)

1849. D. H. Joel, Rabbi of Sheversenz, published in 1849 a very elaborate critique on Franck's *Religious Philosophy of the Sohar*, which is an exceedingly good supplement to Franck's work, though Joel's treatise is of a negative character, and endeavours to demolish Franck's theory without propounding another in its stead. Thus much, however, Joel positively states, that though the *Sohar* in its present form

<sup>44</sup> The Literary Remains of Landauer, comprising his researches on the Kabbalah, have been published in the *Literaturblatt des Orients*, vol. vi, p. 178, &c.

could not have been written by R. Simon b. Jochai, and though the author of it may not have lived before the thirteenth century, yet its fundamental doctrines to a great extent are not the invention of the author, but are derived from ancient Jewish sources, either documentary or oral.<sup>45</sup>

1851. After a lapse of seven years Jellinek fulfilled the promise which he made in the preface to his German translation of Franck's *la Kabbale ou la philosophie religieuse des Hébreux*, by publishing an Essay on the authorship of the *Sohar*. And in 1851 this industrious scholar published a historico-critical Treatise, in which he proves, almost to demonstration, that Moses b. Shem Tob de Leon is the author of the *Sohar*.<sup>46</sup> Several of his arguments are given in the second part of this Essay (*vide supra*, p. 174, &c.), in our examination of the age and authorship of the *Sohar*.

1852. Whilst busily engaged in his researches on the authorship and composition of the *Sohar*, Jellinek was at the same time extending his labours to the history of the Kabbalah generally, the results of which he communicated in two parts (Leipzig, 1852), entitled *Contributions to the History of the Kabbalah*. The first of these parts embraces (1) the study and history of the *Book Jetzira*, (2) diverse topics connected with the *Sohar*, and (3) Kabbalistic doctrines and writings prior to the *Sohar*; whilst the second part (1) continues the investigation on the Kabbalistic doctrines and writings prior to the *Sohar*, as well as (2) discusses additional points connected with the *Sohar*, and (3) gives the original text to the history of the Kabbalah.<sup>47</sup>

1853. Supplementary to the above works, Jellinek pub-

<sup>45</sup> *Die Religions-philosophie des Sohar*, Von D. H. Joel. Leipzig, 1849, p. 72, &c.

<sup>46</sup> *Moses Ben Schem-Tob de Leon und sein Verhältniss zum Sohar*, Von Adolph Jellinek. Leipzig, 1851.

<sup>47</sup> *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala*, Von Adolph Jellinek, first and second parts. Leipzig, 1852.

lished, twelve months afterwards, the first part of a *Selection of Kabbalistic Mysticism*, which comprises the Hebrew texts of (1) *The Treatise on the Emanations* (מסכת אצילות), (2) *The Book of Institutions* (ספר העיון), by R. Chamai Gaon, (3) *The Rejoinder of R. Abraham b. Samuel Abulafia to R. Solomon b. Adereth*, and (4) The 'Treatise entitled *Kether Shem Tob* (כתר שם טוב), by R. Abraham of Cologne. These Treatises, which are chiefly taken from MSS. at the public Libraries in Paris and Hamburg, are preceded by learned Introductions discussing the characteristics, the age, the authorship and the sources of each document, written by the erudite editor.<sup>48</sup> May Dr. Jellinek soon fulfil his promise, and continue to edit these invaluable contributions to the Kabbalah, as well as publish his own work on the import of this esoteric doctrine.

1856. Dr. Etheridge, in his *Manual on Hebrew Literature*, entitled *Jerusalem and Tiberias*, devotes seventy pages to a description of the Kabbalah. It might have been expected that this industrious writer, who draws upon Jewish sources, would give us the result of the researches of the above-named Hebraists. But Dr. Etheridge has done no such thing;—he confuses the import of the *Book Jetzira*, the *Maase Bereshith* (מעשה בראשית) and the *Maase Merkaba* (מעשה מרכבה), with the doctrines of the Kabbalah; and assigns both to the *Book Jetzira* and to the *Sohar* an antiquity which is contrary to all the results of modern criticism. The following extract from his work will suffice to shew the correctness of our remarks:—

“To the authenticity of the *Zohar*, as a work of the early Kabbalistic school, objections have indeed been made, but they are not of sufficient gravity to merit an extended investigation. The opinion that ascribes it as a *pseudo* fabrication to Moses de Leon in the thirteenth century, has, I imagine, but few believers among the learned in this subject in our own day. The references to Shemun ben Yochai and the Kabala in the Talmud, and abundant internal evidence found in the

48 *Auswahl Kabbalistischer Mystik*, part 1. Leipzig, 1853.

book itself, exhibit the strongest probability, not that Shemun himself was the author of it, but that it is the fruit and result of his personal instructions, and of the studies of his immediate disciples."<sup>49</sup>

Now the bold assertion that there are few believers among the learned of our own time in *the pseudo* fabrication of the *Sohar* by Moses de Leon in the thirteenth century, when such learned men as Zunz,<sup>50</sup> Geiger,<sup>51</sup> Sachs,<sup>52</sup> Jellinek<sup>53</sup> and a host of other most distinguished Jewish scholars, regard it almost as an established fact; as well as the statement that there are *references to the Kabbalah in the Talmud*, can only be accounted for from the fact that Dr. Etheridge has not rightly comprehended the import of the Kabbalah, and that he is entirely unacquainted with the modern researches in this department of literature.

1857. The elaborate essay on Jewish literature by the learned Steinschneider, which appeared in *Ersch and Gruber's Encyclopædia*, and which has been translated into English, contains a most thorough review of this esoteric doctrine. It is, however, to be remarked that the pages devoted to this subject give not so much an analysis of the subject, as a detailed account of its literature; and, like all the writings of this excellent scholar, are replete with most useful information.<sup>54</sup>

1858-1861. A most instructive and thorough analysis of the *Sohar* appeared in a Jewish periodical, entitled *Ben Chananja*, volumes i, ii, iii, and iv.<sup>55</sup> This analysis was

<sup>49</sup> *Jerusalem and Tiberias; Sora and Cordova*, by J. W. Etheridge, M.A., Doctor in Philosophy. London, 1856, p. 314.

<sup>50</sup> *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*. Berlin, 1831, p. 405.

<sup>51</sup> *Melo Chafnazim*. Berlin, 1840. Introduction, p. xvii.

<sup>52</sup> *Die Religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien*. Berlin, 1845, p. 327.

<sup>53</sup> *Moses Ben Schem Tob de Leon*. Leipzig, 1851.

<sup>54</sup> *Jewish Literature*, from the German of M. Steinschneider. London, 1857, pp. 104-122; 249-309.

<sup>55</sup> *Versuch einer umständlichen Analyse des Sohars*, von Schuldirektor Ignatz Stern, in *Ben Chananja, Monatschrift für jüdische Theologie*, vol. iv. Szegedin, 1858-1861.

made by Ignatz Stern, who has also translated into German those portions of the *Sohar* which are called *the Book of Mysteries*, *the Great Assembly*, and *the Small Assembly*, and has written a vocabulary to the *Sohar*. The recent death of this great student in the Kabbalah is greatly to be lamented. With the exception of the analysis of the *Sohar*, all his works are in MS.; and it is to be hoped that the accomplished Leopold Löw, chief Rabbi of Szegedin, and editor of the *Ben Chananja*, who was the means of bringing the retiring Ignatz Stern into public, will publish his literary remains.

1859. As the Kabbalah has played so important a part in the mental and religious development, and in the history of the Jewish people, the modern historians of the Jews, in depicting the vicissitudes of the nation, felt it to be an essential element of their narrative, to trace the rise and progress of this esoteric doctrine. Thus the learned and amiable Dr. Jost devotes seventeen pages, in his history of the Jews, to this theosophy.<sup>56</sup>

1863. No one, however, has prosecuted with more thoroughness, learning and impartiality the doctrines, origin and development of this esoteric system than the historian Dr. Graetz. He, more than any of his predecessors since the publication of Landauer's literary remains, has in a most masterly manner carried out the principle laid down by this deceased scholar, and has distinguished between mysticism and the Kabbalah. Graetz has not only given a most lucid description of the doctrines and import of the Kabbalah in its original form, but has proved to demonstration, in a very elaborate treatise, that Moses de Leon is the author of the *Sohar*.<sup>57</sup> Whatever may be the shortcomings of this portion

<sup>56</sup> *Geschichte des Judenthums und seiner Secten*, Von Dr. J. M. Jost, vol. iii, p. 66-81. Leipzig, 1859.

<sup>57</sup> *Geschichte der Juden*, Von Dr. H. Graetz, vol. vii, pp. 73-87; 442-459; 487-507. Leipzig, 1863.

of Graetz's history, no one who studies it will fail to learn from it the true nature of this esoteric doctrine.

1863. Leopold Löw, the chief Rabbi of Szegedin, whose name has already been mentioned in connection with Ignatz Stern, published a very lengthy review of Graetz's description of the Kabbalah. Though the Rabbi laboured hard to shake Dr. Graetz's position, yet, with the exception perhaps of showing that the Kabbalah was not invented in opposition to Maimonides' system of philosophy, the learned historian's results remain unassailed. Moreover, there is a confusion of mysticism with the Kabbalah through many parts of Dr. Löw's critique.<sup>58</sup>

We are not aware that anything has appeared upon this subject since the publication of Graetz's researches on the Kabbalah and Löw's lengthy critique on these researches. Of course it is not to be supposed that we have given a *complete* history of the Literature on this theosophy; since the design of this Essay and the limits of the volume of "the Literary and Philosophical Society's Transactions," in which it appears, alike preclude such a history. This much, however, we may confidently say, that nothing has been omitted which essentially bears upon the real progress or development of this esoteric doctrine.

Several works, in which lengthy accounts of the Kabbalah are given, have been omitted, because these descriptions do not contribute anything very striking in their treatment of the Kabbalah, nor have they been the occasion of any remarkable incidents among the followers of this system.

Among the works thus omitted are Buddeus' *Introduction to the History of Hebrew Philosophy*; <sup>59</sup> Basnage's *History of the Jews*,<sup>60</sup> where a very lengthy account is given of the

<sup>58</sup> Comp. *Ben Chananja Monatschrift für jüdische Theologie*, vol. vi, pp. 725-733; 741-747; 785-791; 805-809; 821-828; 933-942. Szegedin, 1863.

<sup>59</sup> *Introductio ad Hist. Philosoph. Ebraeorum*. Halle, 1702.

<sup>60</sup> *Histoire des Juifs*, English translation, pp. 184-256. London, 1708.

Kabbalah, without any system whatever, chiefly derived from the work of Kircher; Wolf's account of the Jewish Kabbalah, given in his elaborate Bibliographical Thesaurus of Hebrew Literature, where a very extensive catalogue is given of Kabbalistic authors;<sup>61</sup> and Molitor's *Philosophy of History*.<sup>62</sup>

We sincerely regret to have omitted noticing Munk's description of the Kabbalah.<sup>63</sup> For, although he does not attempt to separate the gnostic from the mystical elements, which were afterwards mixed up with the original doctrines of this esoteric system, yet no one can peruse the interesting portion treating on the Kabbalah and the *Sohar* without deriving from it information not to be found elsewhere.

61 *De Cabbala Judeorum*, in his *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, vol. ii, pp. 1191-1247. Hamburg, 1728.

62 *Philosophie der Geschichte oder über die Tradition*, vol. iii. Münster, 1839.

63 *Mélanges de Philosophie Juive et Arabe*, p. 275, &c. Paris, 1859.

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# GLOSSARY

## N

**אדם עליון** *the Heavenly Man*. I. One of the names of the first *Sephira*, 90, 94, 98. II. An appellation of the entire Sephiric decade, 100.

**אדם קדמון** *the Primordial, the Archetypal man*, one of the names of the Sephiric decade, 97.

**אדרא** (= *Edra*), a seat, a sitting, an assembly, the assembly of R. Simon b. Jaichanan's disciples, which at its commencement was rather numerous, and hence obtained the name **אדרא רבא** *the Great Assembly*. In the course of time, however, death removed many of them, and only left a few, to whom R. Simon continued to communicate the secrets of the Kabbalah. These few surviving disciples, at the close of their Rabbin's life, are designated **אדרא קטן** *the Small Assembly*. Metonymically the two expressions **אדרא רבא** and **אדרא קטן** denote the two parts of the *Sohar* which purport to give the Kabbalistic revelations communicated by R. Simon to the said two assemblies, 164, 165.

**אמרי** *I am* (Exod. iii, 14), the divine name corresponding to the first *Sephira*, 90.

**אופנים** (plural of **אופן**), translated *wheels* in the English version (Ezek. i, 20), is taken by the Jewish Rabbins to denote a *distinct order of angels*, just as Cherubim and Seraphim. Hence the Talmud explains Exod. xx, 20, by "thou shalt not make the likeness of those ministering servants who serve before me in heaven, viz., Ophanim, Seraphim, sacred Chajoth and missive angels." (**לא תעשון כמות שמשין**) **השמשין לפני במרום כגון אופנים ושמשין חדות** *Rosh Ha-Shana*, 24 b.) *Ophan*, the prince of this order, is regarded by the ancient sages as identical with the angel *Sandalphon*, **סנדלפון** = *synadelphos* *co-brother or fellow-companion* of the angel Metatron. (Comp. Rashi on Ezek. i, 20.) In the Kabbalah this name of the angelic host answers to the second *Sephira*, 90.

**אילן** *the tree*, the Kabbalistic form in which the ten *Sephira* are represented, 99, 100,

**אין** *the not-existent*, an appellation of the Deity in his absolute nature, 88.

**אין סוף** *the boundless*, an appellation of the Deity viewed apart from the creation, 88, 95.

**אל** *the Mighty One*, the divine name answering to the fourth *Sephira*, 91.

**אל חי** *the Mighty Living One*, the divine name answering to the ninth *Sephira*, 92.

**אלה** *the Almighty*, the divine name answering to the fifth *Sephira*, 91.

**אמרים** *the Omnipotent*, the divine name answering to the sixth *Sephira*, 91.

**אמרי צבאות** *the Omnipotent Sabaoth*, the divine name answering to the eighth *Sephira*, 92.

**אנפין** *faces*, the three aspects, viz., the Intellectual, Moral and Material worlds in which the *En Soph* manifested himself, 98, 99. **אין אנפין** *Macroprosopon*, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, 90, whilst **אין אנפין** *Microprosopon*, is the transcendent Being operating upon the earth, and denotes the *En Soph* as immanent in the universe, which lies in the essence of his creativeness.

**אמרי** (= *specularia*, with prosthetic מ), *mirror*. **אמרי נהר** *the luminous mirror*, applied to the extraordinary faculty of prophetic knowledge possessed by the human soul, which was vouchsafed to Moses in an exceptional degree, 110.

**אמרי** *the non-luminous mirror*, applied to the ordinary faculty of knowledge, 110.

**אמרים** (plural of **אמר**) which also occurs in Isa. xxxiii, 7, denotes in ancient Jewish literature an *order of angels*, just as *Cherubim*, *Seraphim*, &c., are the names of other angelic classes. Thus the Talmud remarks **אמרים ומוצאים אותם בארון הקודש נצחו** *the angelic order Arim and the most distinguished of men caught at the sacred ark, the angelic order Arim prevailed, and the sacred ark was captured.* (*Kethuboth*, 104 a.) Hence Rashi, Kimchi and





**יהוה** *Jehovah*, the divine name answering to the third *Sephira*, 90.

**יהוה שבאוה** *Jehovah Sabaoth*, the divine name answering to the seventh *Sephira*, 91.

**יסוד** *foundation*, name of the ninth *Sephira*, 92, 96, 98, 99, 100.

## כ

**כורסיא** *the throne*, an appellation of the *Briatic World*, the abode of the pure spirits, 103, 108; see also **עולם** *world*.

**כתר** *crown*. I. One of the names of the first *Sephira*, 89, 95, 97, 99, 100. II. Synecdochically, the intellectual world, 101.

## כז

**כדוש** (from **דרש** *to search into, to examine, to investigate, to explain*), which properly denotes the exposition of Scripture, is the name of the most ancient Jewish exposition of the Hebrew Bible. In its restricted sense it is used to denote the collection of expositions on the Pentateuch and the Five *Migelloth*, (viz., the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther) called *Midrash Rabboth* (**כדוש**), *Midrash Rabba* (**כדוש רבא**), 126 *note*; or simply *Midrash*, 88 *note*, 108. Each of the books composing this collection is also quoted by its separate name; *ex. gr.*, the commentary on Genesis is called *Bereshith Rabba* (**בראשית רבא**) 88 *note*, 103; the commentary on Exodus is cited by the name of *Shemoth Rabba*, that on the Leviticus by the name of *Va-Ikra Rabba*, that on Numbers by the name of *Bamidbar Rabba*, that on Deuteronomy by the name of *Debarim Rabba*, and so on. For an account of the different *Midrashim*, their import, design, &c., &c., we must refer to Alexander's edition of Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, article *MIDRASH*.

**כסטרין** (= Latin *Metator*, with the termination **ין**), captain of the myriads of the angelic hosts, 109, 110.

**מטרוניא** *the matron*, name of the tenth *Sephira* as representing the Material World, 102.

**מלכא** *King*, or **קדשא** *Sacred King*, name of the sixth *Sephira* as representing the Sensuous World, 101.

**מלכות** *Kingdom*. I. One of the names of the tenth *Sephira*, 92, 96, 98, 99, 100. II. Appellation of the Material World as

represented by the triad of the *Sephiroth*, 101, 102.

**מסורה** the traditionally transmitted critical apparatus of the Old Testament, distinguished from **קבלה** the traditionally received esoteric doctrine, 86.

**מקום** *place*, like the Greek *τόπος* in the Septuagint, by Philo, the Fathers, &c., denotes *God* who comprehends everything, and who, as it were, is the place in which all things exist *αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς κατέσται τόπος*, Philo, *de Somn.* i, 575. The Jewish view on this subject is given 88.

**מרכבה** *Chariot*, name of Ezek. i and x, which treat on the Divine Throne, resting on wheels, and carried by sacred animals. Great mysteries are attached by the ancient Jews to the whole of this description of the Deity and his surroundings, which in imitation of **מלשה בראשית** *the work of the hexahemeron, cosmogony*, is also called **מלשה מרכבה** *the Work of the Chariot*, 94, 184.

**מזקלא** *balance*, the symbolical name for the two opposite sexes in each triad of the *Sephiroth*, which are regarded as the two scales of a balance united by the beam, which is the third *Sephira*, 92.

## נ

**נוטריון** (= *notaricon* from *notarius, a shorthand writer*) an exegetical rule, according to which every letter of a word is taken as the initial of the word, 131, 132.

**נצח** *firmness*, name of the seventh *Sephira*, 91, 96, 98, 99, 100.

**נקודה נטוה** *smooth or indivisible point*, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, 89.

**נקודה ראשונה** *primordial point*, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, 89.

## ד

**סמא** *pillar*, the general name of each of the three perpendicular lines which are obtained in the arrangements of the ten *Sephiroth* in the Kabbalistic diagrams. When particularized, the three *Sephiroth* forming the right of the diagram are designated **סמא ימינה** *the Right Pillar*, 99, 100; the three *Sephiroth* on the left are called **סמא שמאלה** *the Left Pillar*, 100; whilst the central four *Sephiroth* are designated **סמא דאמצעיותא** *the Middle Pillar*.

**סמאל** *Samäel, the prince of the evil spirits*, (**סמאל דרשע ראש כל הרשעים**) *Debarim Rabba*

*Parsha, xi*), the presence angel of Edom, i.e., Rome, the arch enemy of Israel. He is often identified with Satan, the angel of death, in ancient Jewish literature. Hence the so-called Chaldee paraphrase of Jonathan b. Uzziel renders Gen. iii, 8, by "And the woman saw Samüel the angel of death," and the Chaldee paraphrase on Job xxviii, 7, translates it "the path to the tree of life, which Samüel, who flies like a bird, did not know, and which the eye of Eve did not perceive" (שביל אינן ח"י רמא) הכמיה סמאל דרור הדך עזא ולא ספריה עינא (רדוד). Hence the Kabbalistic notions, 111; 126.

*ספירות* (plural *ספירות*) emanations. Its etymology and meaning are discussed, 89, 96, 97.

## ע

*עולם* world. According to the Kabbalah there are four worlds which emanated from each other in succession. 1. *עולם אמילוח* the World of Emanations, consisting of the ten *Sephiroth* which proceeded direct from the *En Soph*, and hence the appellation of the *Sephiric* decade, 97, 98, 105, 106. 2. *עולם הבריאה* the World of Creation or the *Britic World*, also called *כורסה* the Throne, which proceeded from the World of Emanations and is the abode of pure spirits, 105, 106. 3. *עולם הציורה* the World of Formation, or the *Jetziratic World* which proceeded from the World of Creation, and is the habitation of angels, 106. And 4. *עולם העשיה* the World of Action or the *Asiatic World*, which proceeded from the World of Formations, and contains the spheres, as well as matter, and is the residence of the Prince of Darkness and his angels, 106, 107.

*עולם המושג* the World of Matter, the third triad of the ten *Sephiroth*, 99, 100, 184.

*עולם הספירות* the World of *Sephiroth*, one of the appellations of the first World on the *Sephiric* decade, 97.

*עולם מורא* the Sensuous or Moral World, appellation of the second triad in the ten *Sephiroth*, 98, 188.

*עולם מושג* the Intellectual World, name of the first triad of the ten *Sephiroth*, 96, 188.

*עולם הקליפות* the World of Shells, one of the appellations of the fourth world, so called because it is the abode of the dregs of the other worlds as well as of the evil spirits, 106, 107.

*עמודא דממציותא* the middle pillar, name of the four central *Sephiroth* representing mildness in the Kabbalistic diagram, 100, 101.

*עמודא דדינה* the pillar of judgment, name of the three *Sephiroth* forming the left in the Kabbalistic diagram, and representing rigour, 99, 100.

*עמודא דרחם* the pillar of love, name of the three *Sephiroth* forming the right in the diagram, and representing mercy, 99, 100.

*עץ חיים* the tree of life, name of the form in which the Kabbalah depicts the ten *Sephiroth*, 99, 100.

*עתיקא* the Aged, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, so called because it was the first which emanated from the *En Soph*, 89.

*עתיקא דעתיקא* the Aged of the Aged, an appellation of the Deity, so called because he is the first of all existences, 89.

*עתיקא קדישא* Holy Aged, another appellation of the Deity, 89.

## פ

*פד* justice, one of the names of the fifth *Sephira*, 91, 90, 98, 99, 100.

*פצוץ* (= *πρόσωπον*) the faces, or the three aspects in which the *En Soph* manifested himself, 99. This is simply a Greek expression denoting exactly the same as the Aramaic *פנים* faces.

## צ

*צירוח* combination an exegetical rule, 195, 199; 224; explained under the article *חבורה*

## ק

*קבלה* reception, the esoteric doctrine received 'by oral tradition and through enigmatic signs in the Pentateuch, known only to the initiated, 86.

## ר

*רם מעלה* inscrutable height, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, 90.

*רשא הוורא* white head, one of the names of the first *Sephira*, 90.

## ש

*שכינה* Shechinah, one of the names of the tenth *Sephira*, 92.

שְׁמַנִּים plural שְׁמַנִּים Pa. lxxviii, 16, the name among the angels answering to the sixth *Sephira*, 91.

שֵׁרָפִים *Seraphim*, Isaiah vi, 6, the name among the angels answering to the fifth *Sephira*, 91.

# ת

תְּמִינָה *permutation*, an exegetical rule, according to which the Hebrew alphabet is bent exactly in the middle; one half is then placed over the other, and the first letter or the first two letters at the beginning of the second line are alternately changed, as exhibited in the table, 136, 137, 138. The

anagrammatic alphabets thus obtained are called by the names which the first two specimen pairs of letters yield, e.g., אֵלִיָּבֶם *Atbam*, אֵחָ"בֶם *Athbasha*, &c. The rule is also called חִלְקָה אֶחָדִית *interchange of letters*, and צִירֵף *combination*, or more fully צִירֵף הָאוֹדִיחַ *combination of letters*.

תְּמִינָה *beauty, mildness*. I. The name of the sixth *Sephira*, 91, 98, 99, 100. II. Appellation of the Sensuous World, as represented by the second triad of the *Sephira*, 101.

תְּרִשִׁיִּים *Tarshishim*, Dan. x, 6, the name among the angelic hosts answering to the seventh *Sephira*, 91.

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